image
DAN WATTERS
RAM V
UNIVERSAL
MONSTERS
MATTHEW ROBERTS
DAVE STEWART
ISSUE
TWO
CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON LIVES!

SKYBOUND ENTERTAINMENT AND IMAGE COMICS PRESENT

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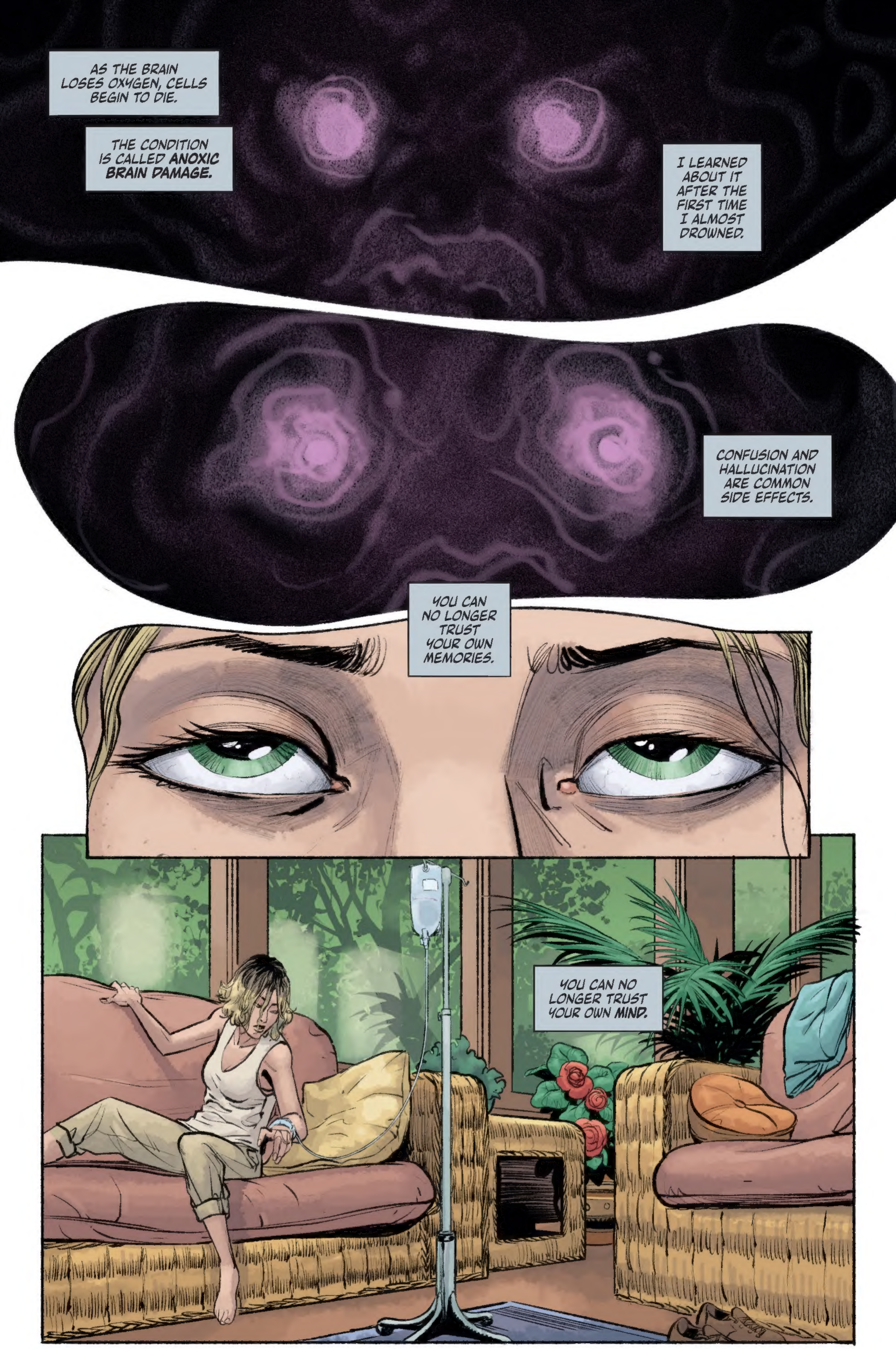
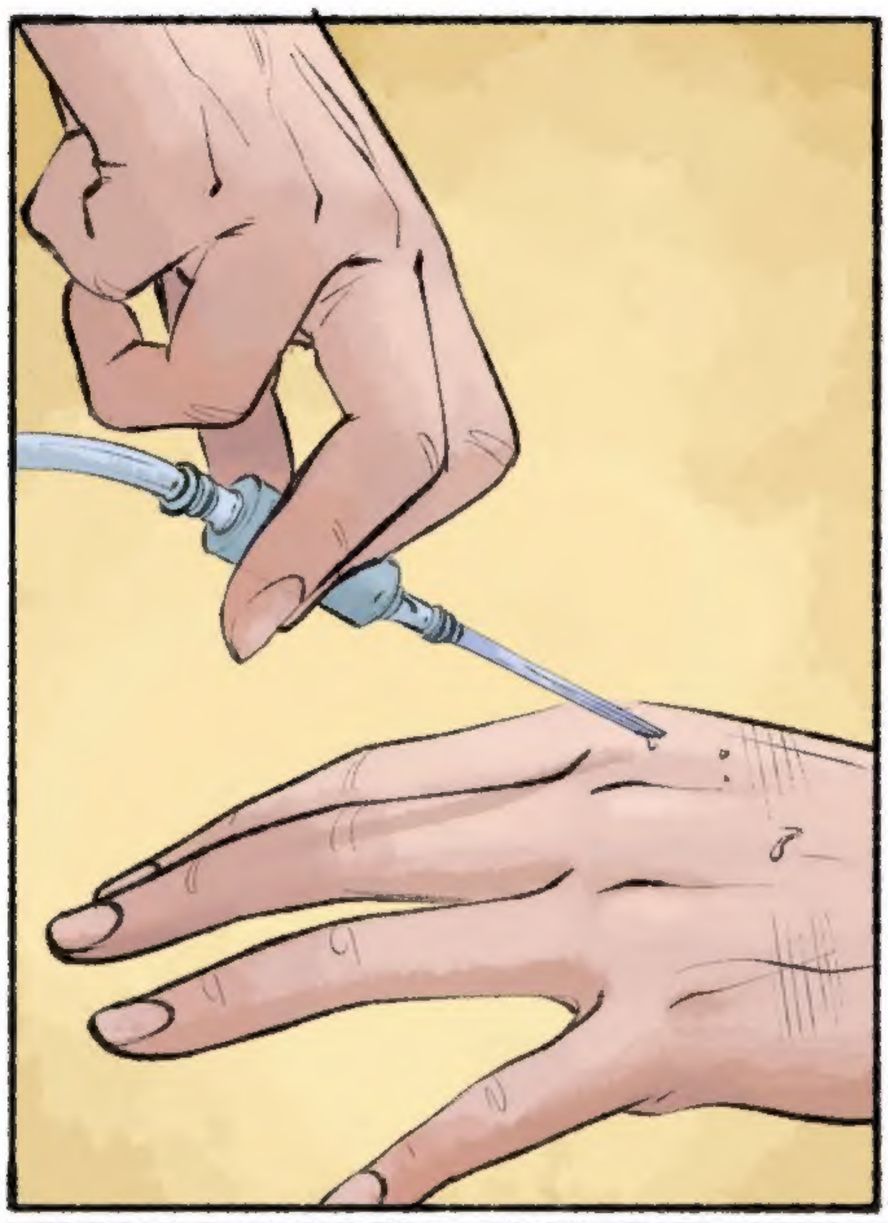
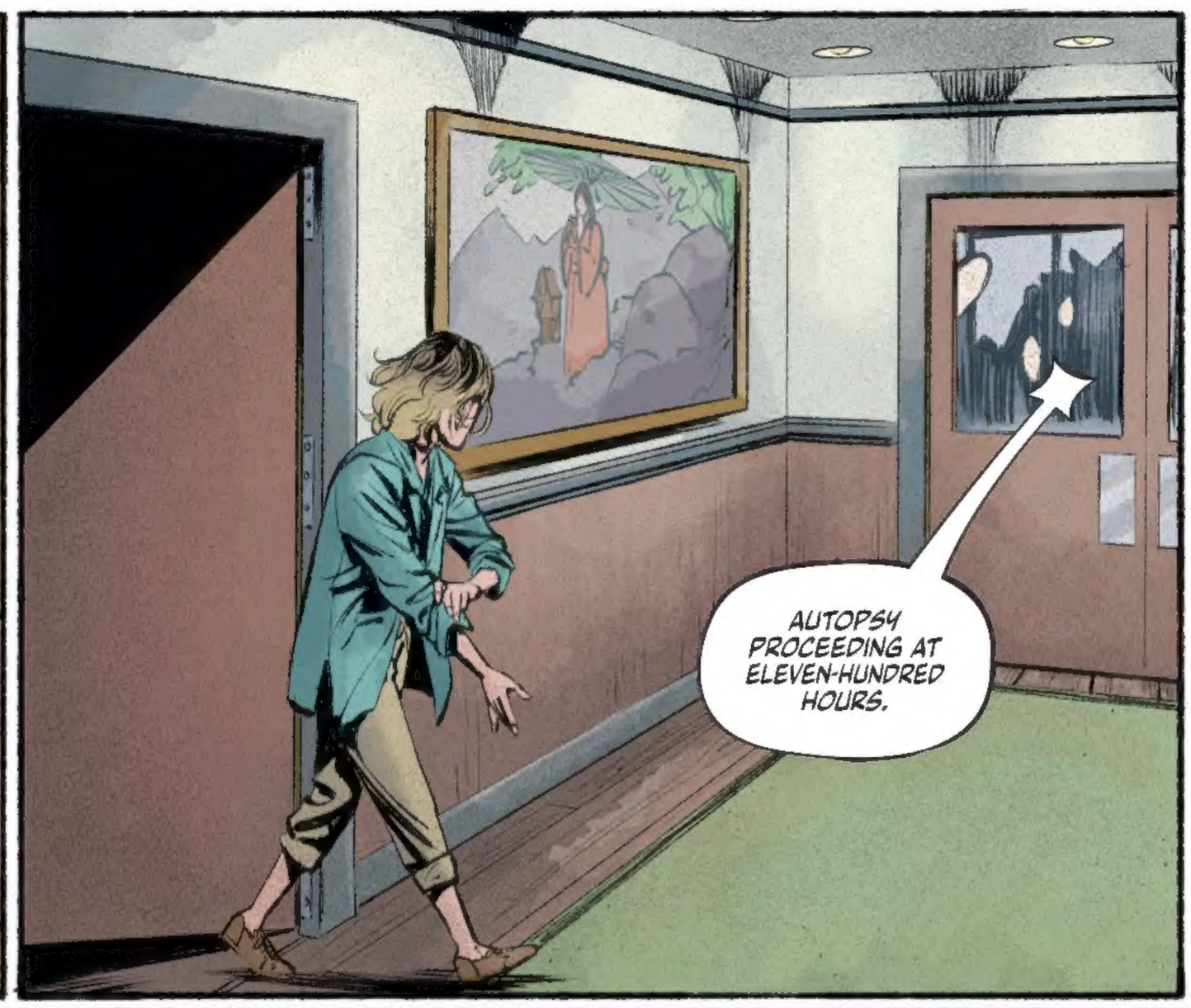
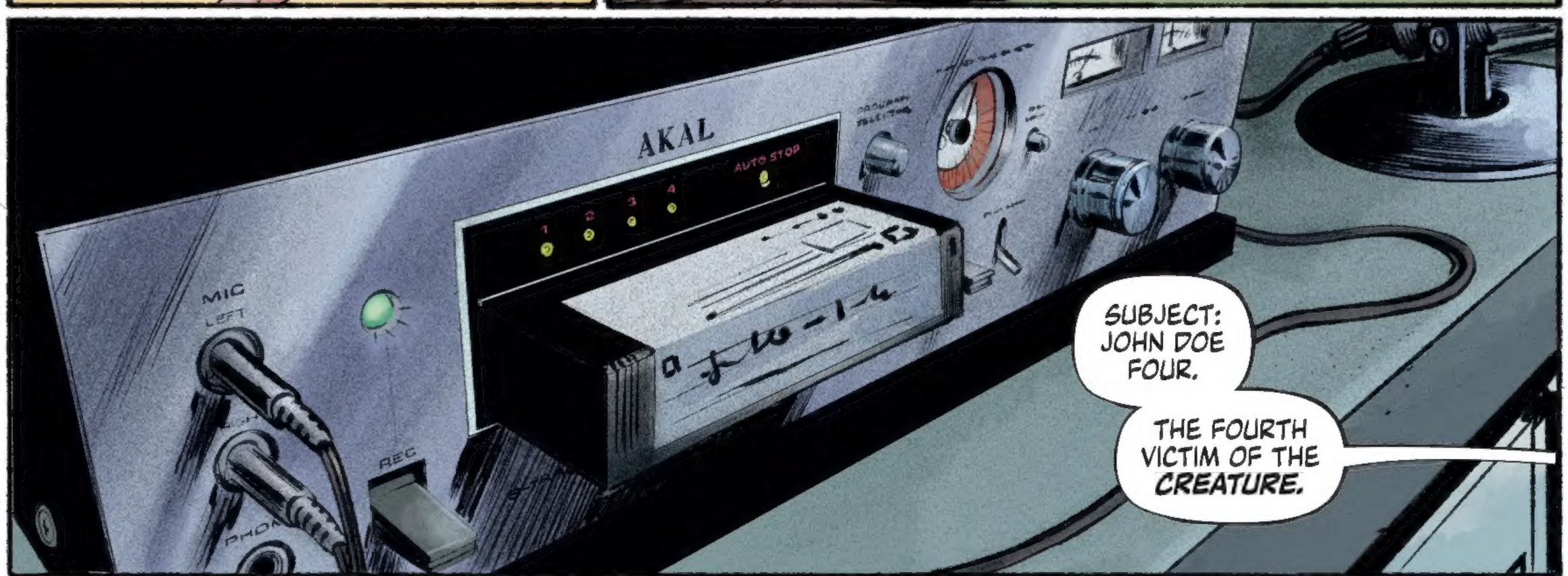
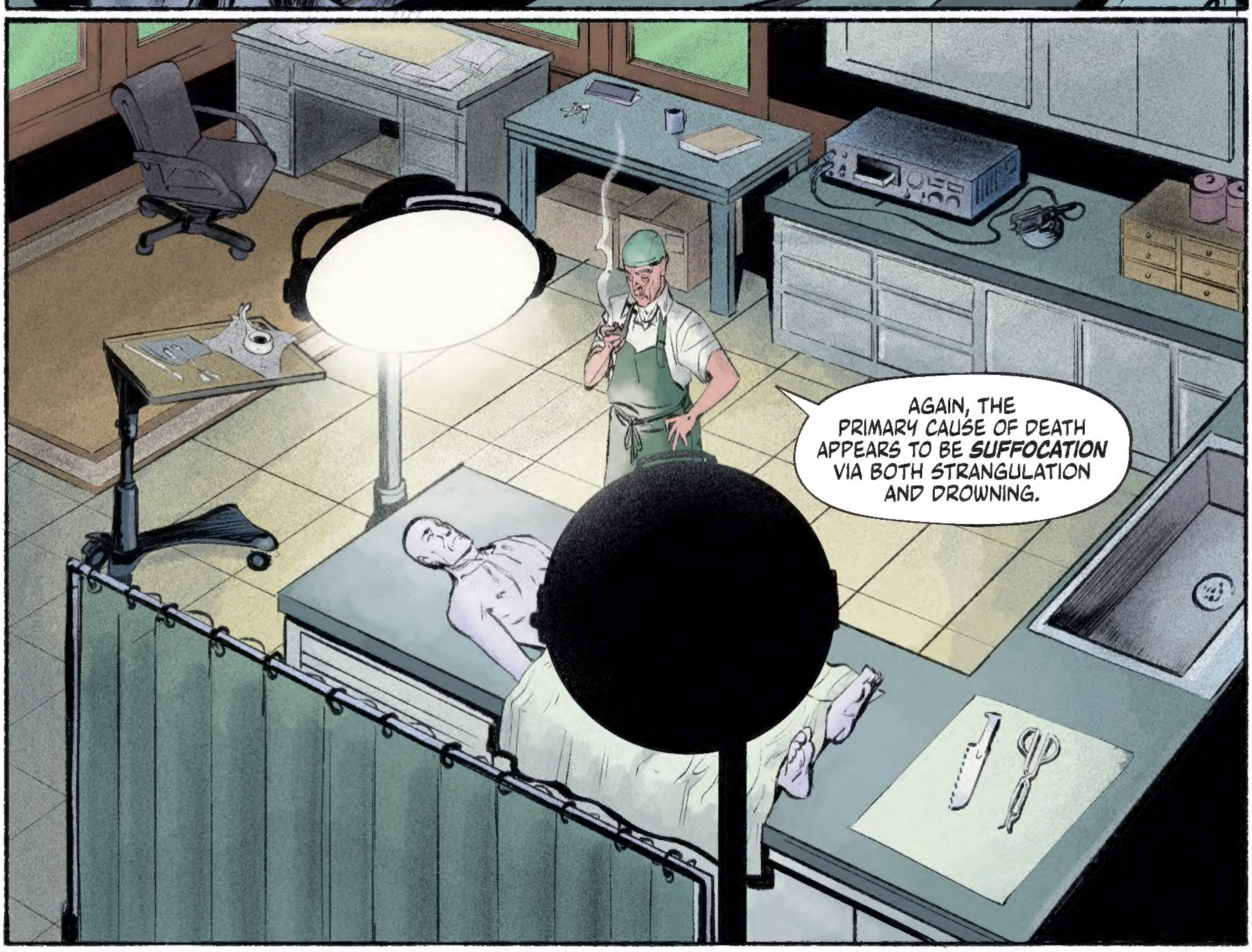

AS THE BRAIN LOSES OXYGEN, CELLS BEGIN TO DIE.
THE CONDITION IS CALLED ANOXIC BRAIN DAMAGE.
I LEARNED ABOUT IT AFTER THE FIRST TIME I ALMOST DROWNED.
CONFUSION AND HALLUCINATION ARE COMMON SIDE EFFECTS.
YOU CAN NO LONGER TRUST YOUR OWN MEMORIES.
YOU CAN NO LONGER TRUST YOUR OWN MIND.

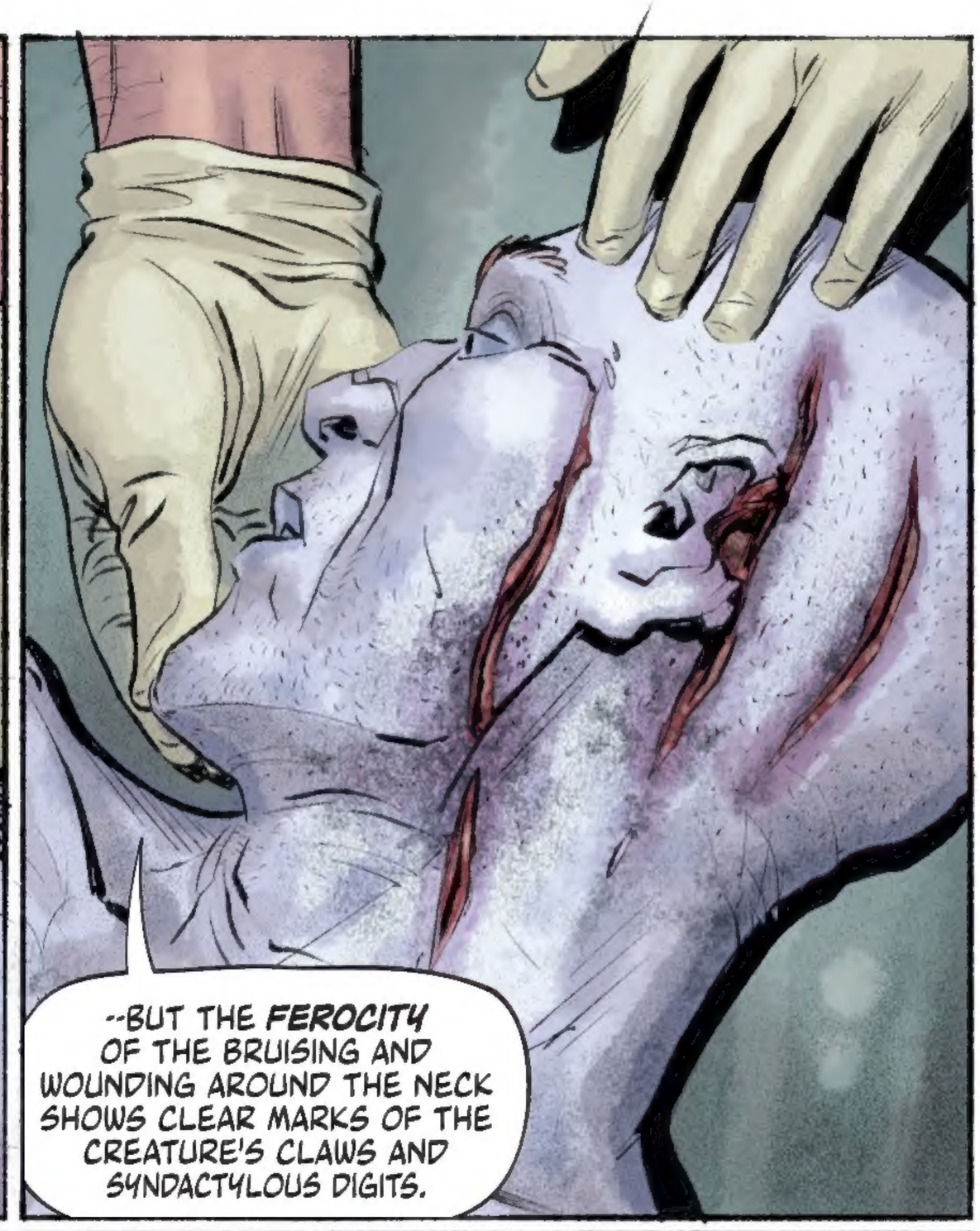


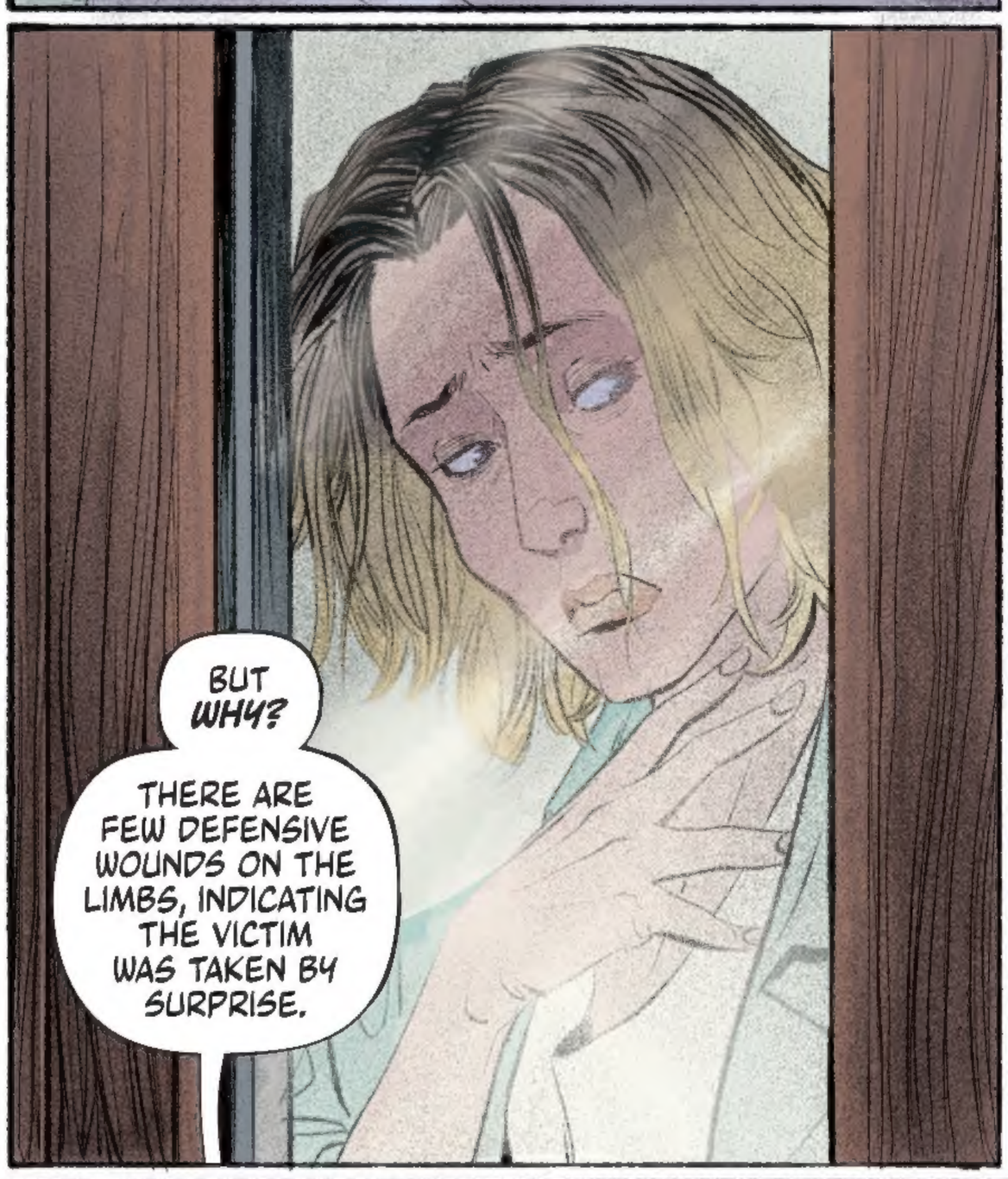

AUTOPSY PROCEEDING AT ELEVEN-HUNDRED HOURS.

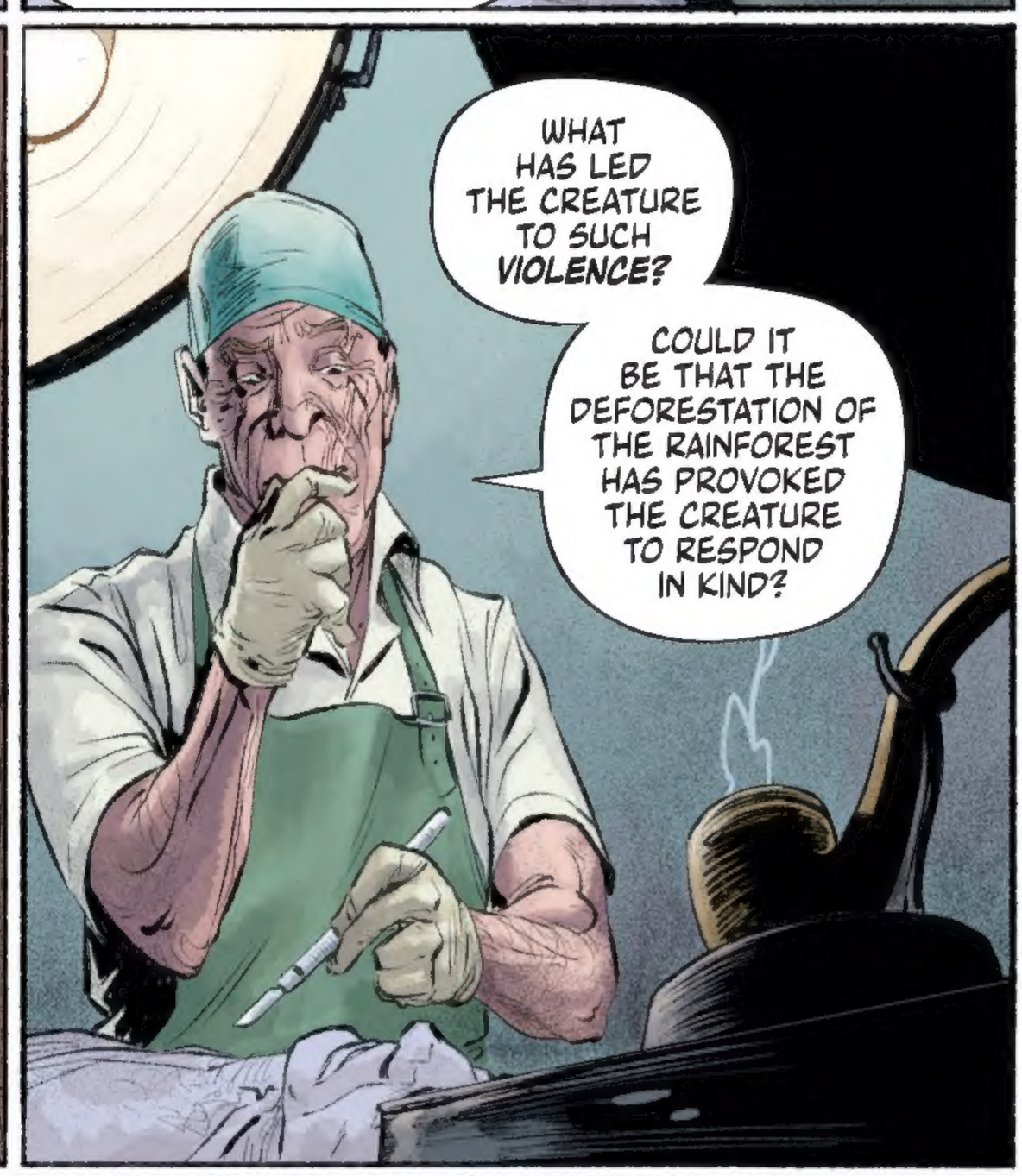

AKAL
AUTO STOP
MIC
LEFT
REC
SUBJECT: JOHN DOE FOUR.
THE FOURTH VICTIM OF THE CREATURE.

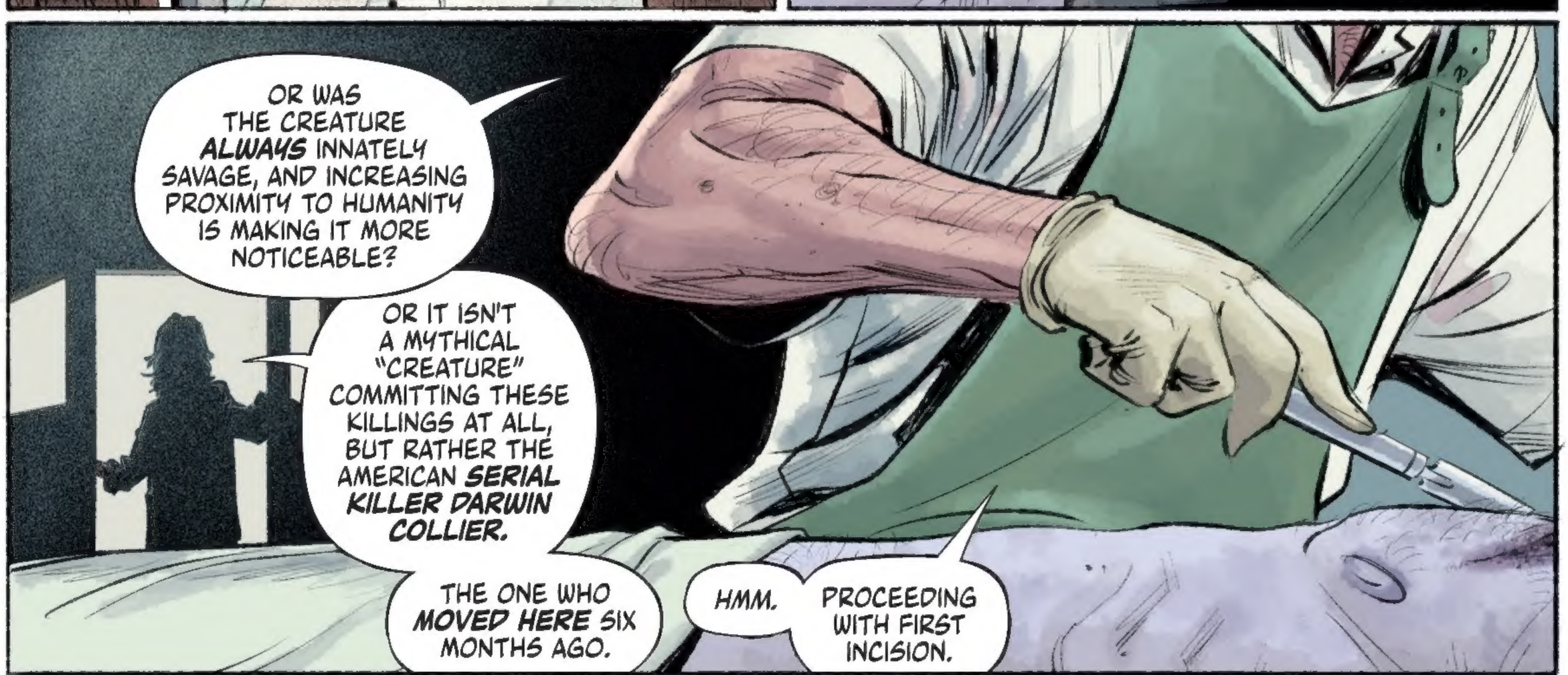

AGAIN, THE PRIMARY CAUSE OF DEATH APPEARS TO BE SUFFOCATION VIA BOTH STRANGULATION AND DROWNING.

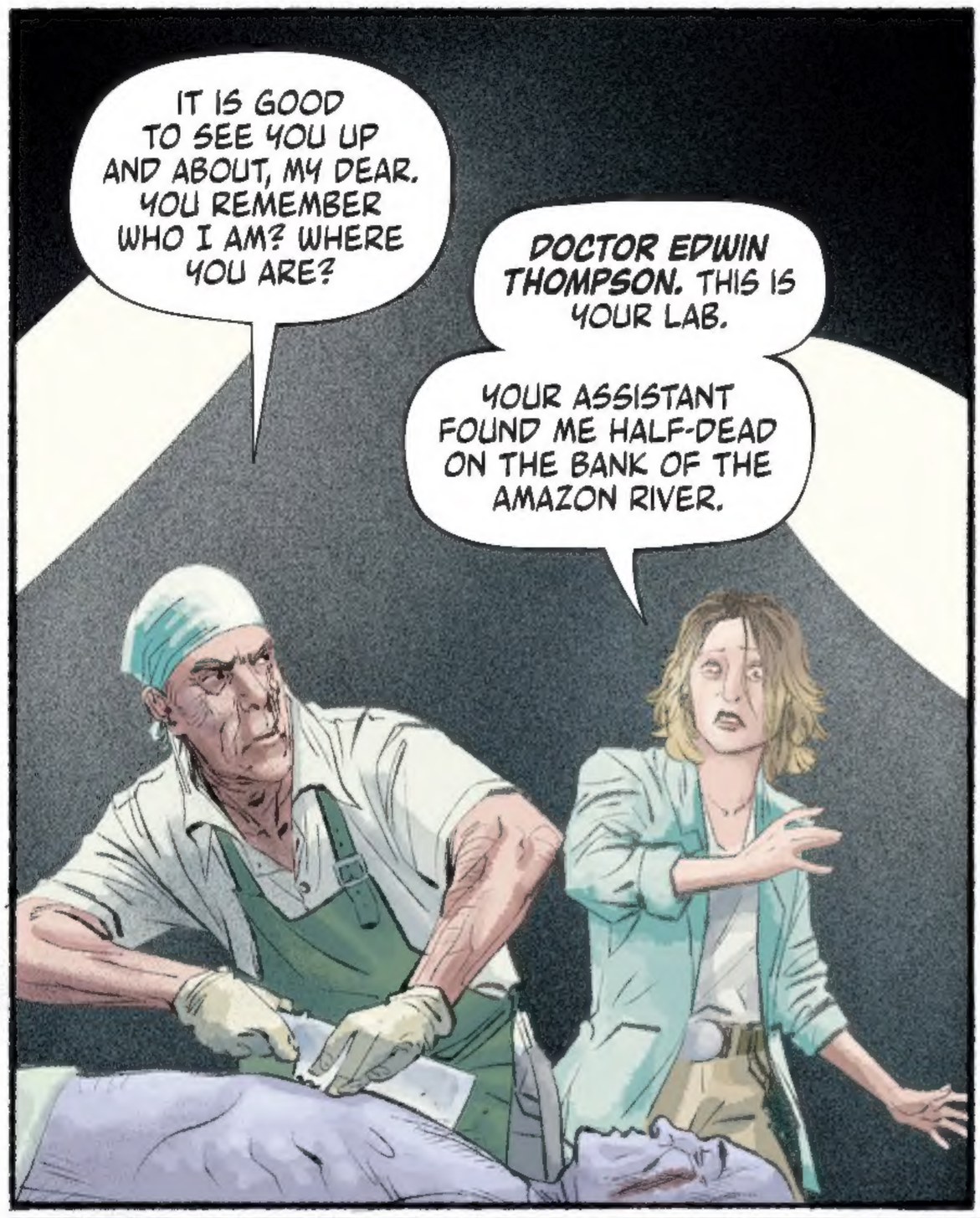
THE LUNGS SOUND FULL, SO THE VICTIM WAS STILL BREATHING WHEN SUBMERGED--


--BUT THE FEROCITY OF THE BRUISING AND WOUNDING AROUND THE NECK SHOWS CLEAR MARKS OF THE CREATURE'S CLAWS AND SYNDACTYLOUS DIGITS.

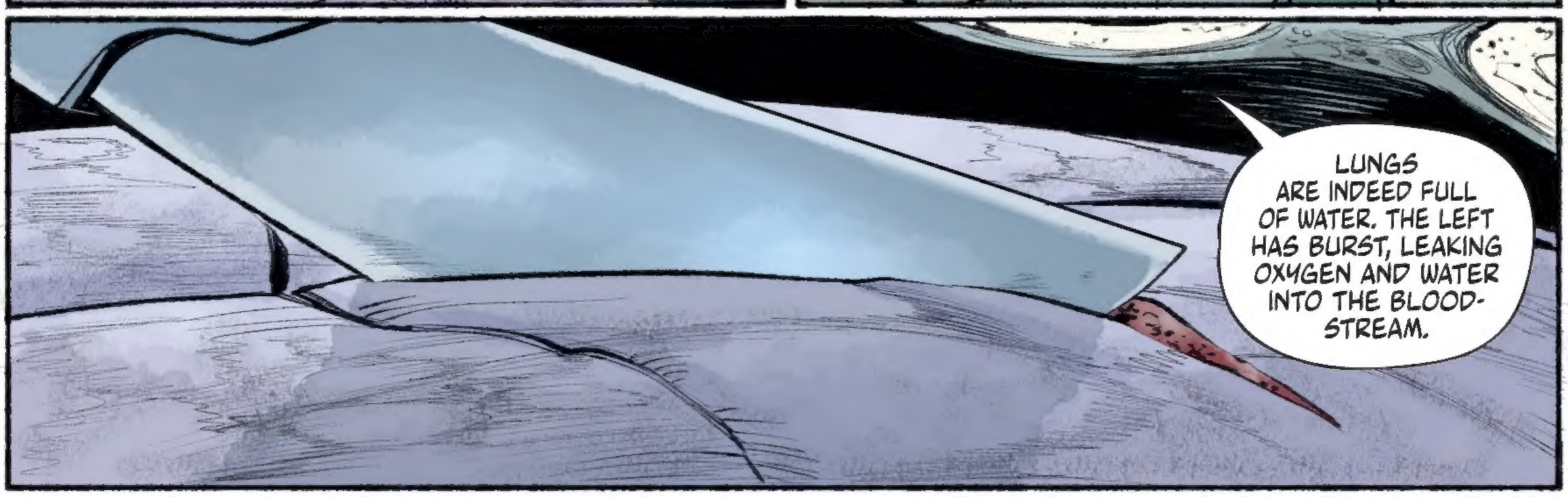

BUT WHY?
THERE ARE FEW DEFENSIVE WOUNDS ON THE LIMBS, INDICATING THE VICTIM WAS TAKEN BY SURPRISE.

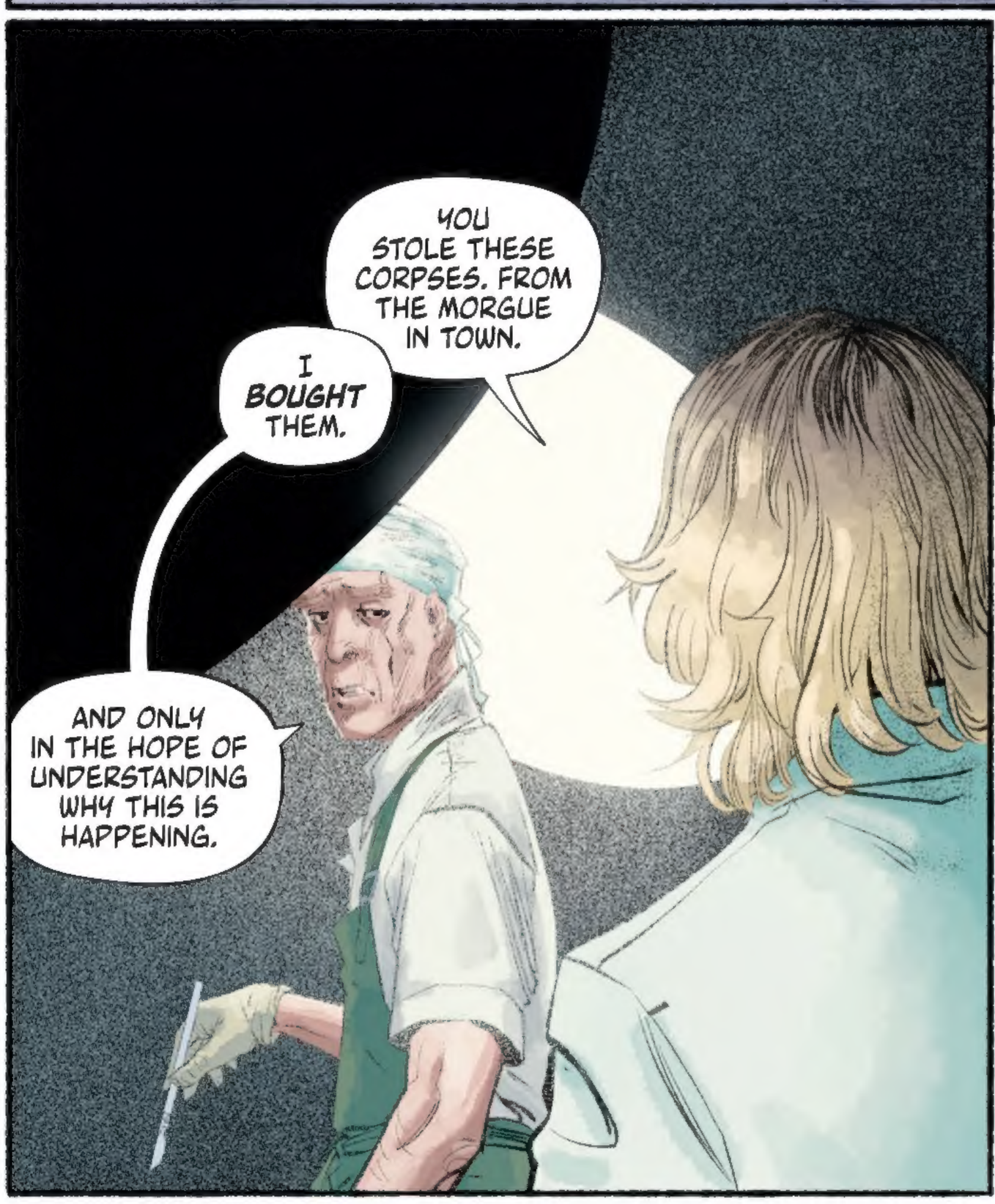

WHAT HAS LED THE CREATURE TO SUCH VIOLENCE?
COULD IT BE THAT THE DEFORESTATION OF THE RAINFOREST HAS PROVOKED THE CREATURE TO RESPOND IN KIND?

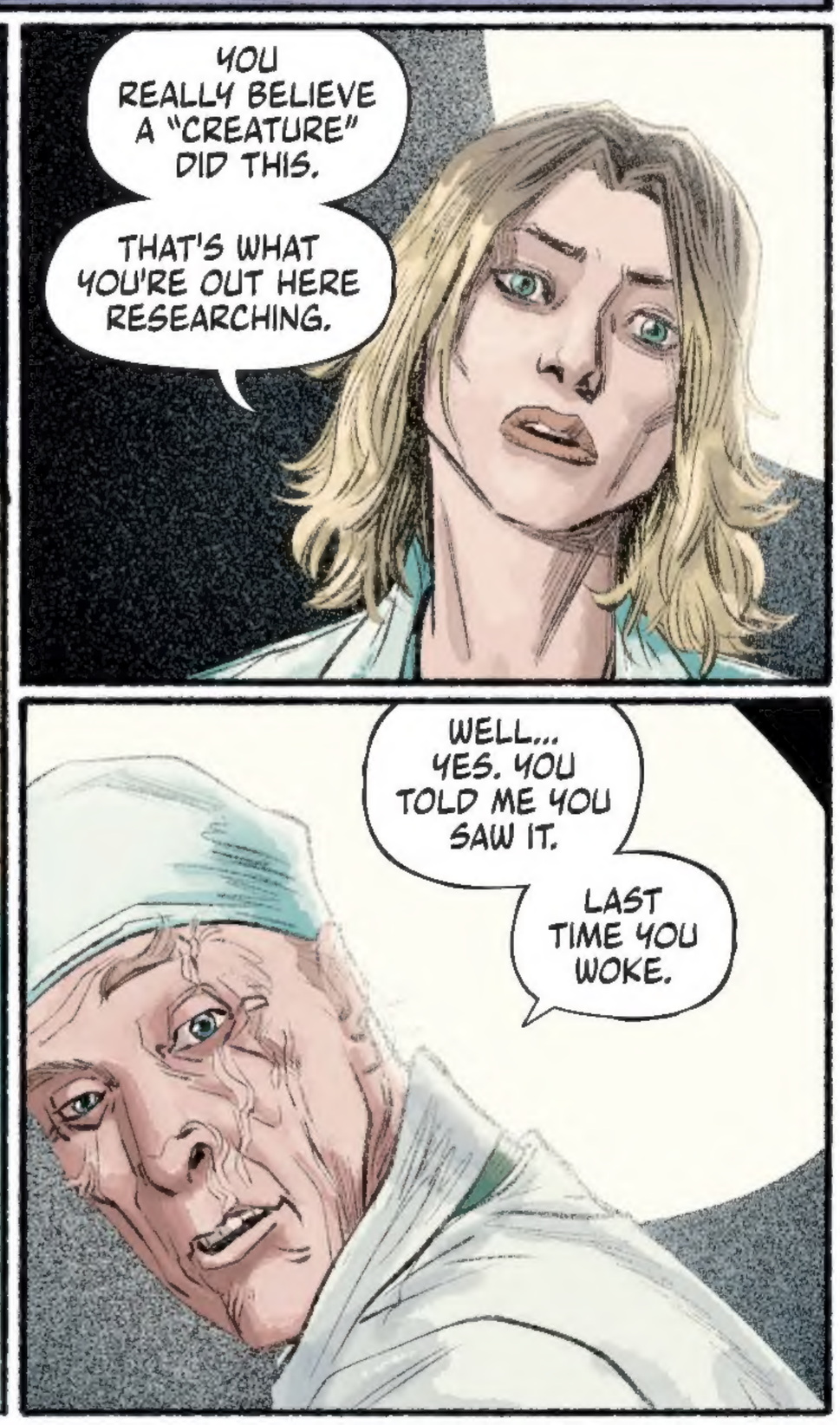

OR WAS THE CREATURE ALWAYS INNATELY SAVAGE, AND INCREASING PROXIMITY TO HUMANITY IS MAKING IT MORE NOTICEABLE?
OR IT ISN'T A MYTHICAL "CREATURE" COMMITTING THESE KILLINGS AT ALL, BUT RATHER THE AMERICAN SERIAL KILLER DARWIN COLLIER.
THE ONE WHO MOVED HERE SIX MONTHS AGO.
HMM.
PROCEEDING WITH FIRST INCISION.

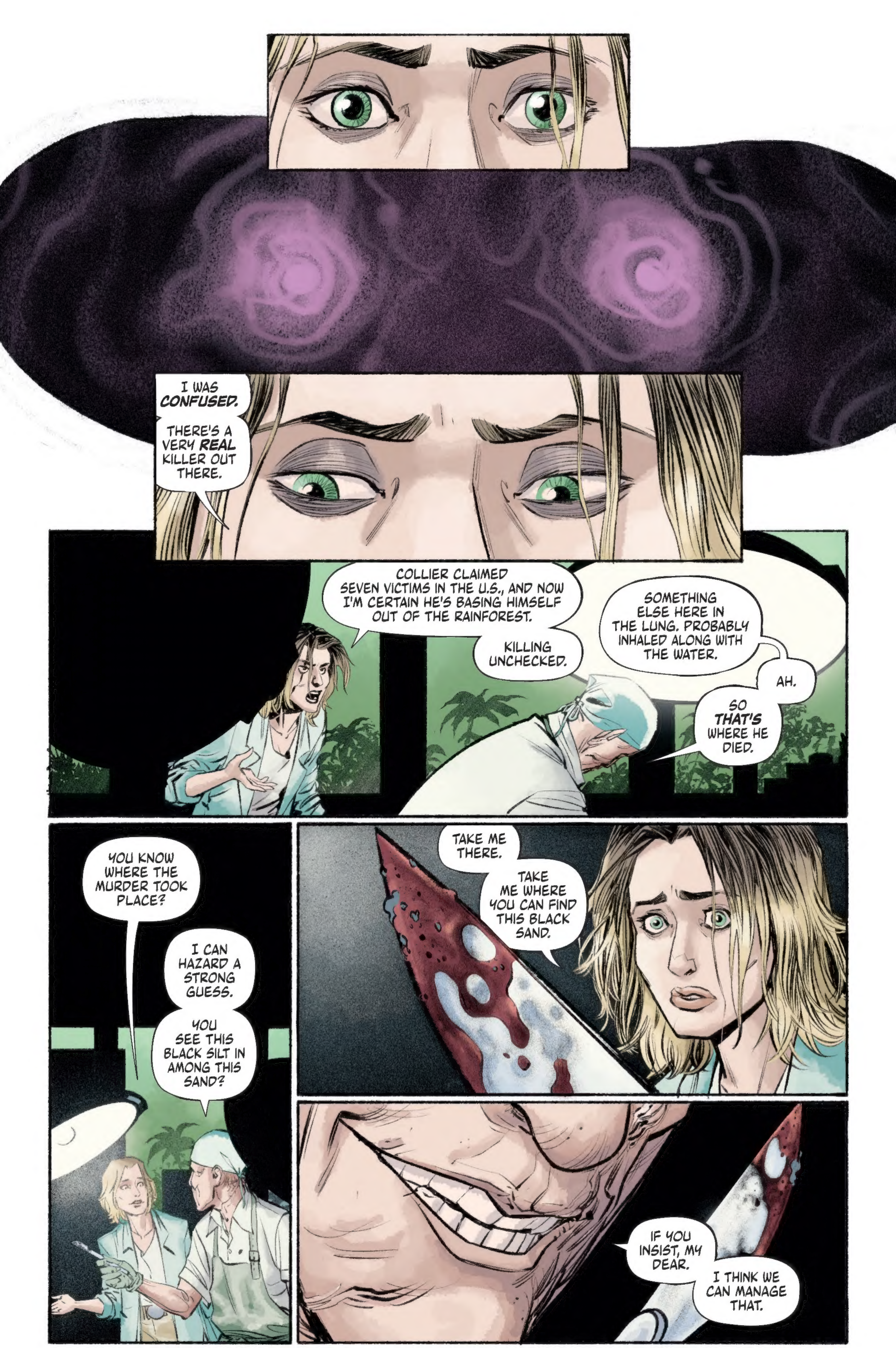

IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU UP AND ABOUT, MY DEAR. YOU REMEMBER WHO I AM? WHERE YOU ARE?
DOCTOR EDWIN THOMPSON. THIS IS YOUR LAB.
YOUR ASSISTANT FOUND ME HALF-DEAD ON THE BANK OF THE AMAZON RIVER.

THAT'S GOOD. YOU SEEMED IN AND OUT OF IT LAST TIME YOU WOKE.
CHRISTIANO WILL BE PLEASED TO SEE YOU SO RECOVERED. I THINK HE'S TAKEN A SHINE TO YOU.


LUNGS ARE INDEED FULL OF WATER. THE LEFT HAS BURST, LEAKING OXYGEN AND WATER INTO THE BLOOD-STREAM.

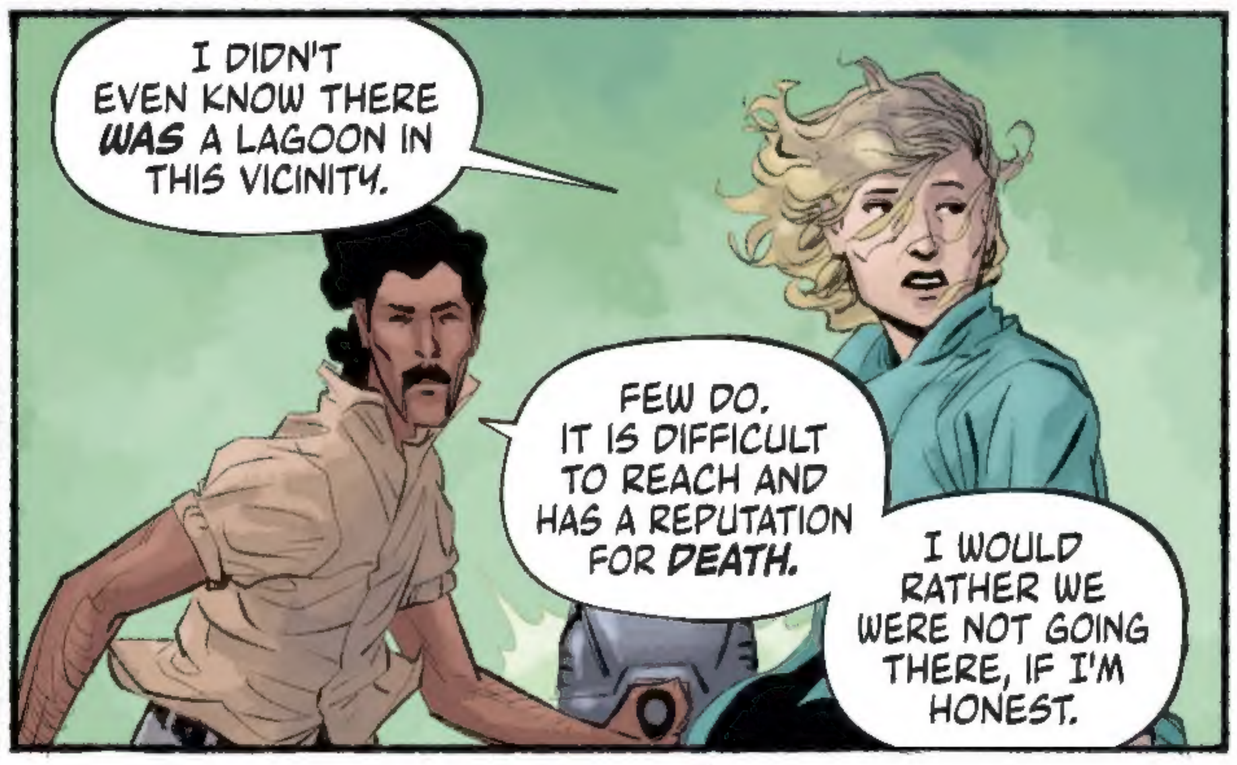

YOU STOLE THESE CORPSES. FROM THE MORGUE IN TOWN.
I BOUGHT THEM.
AND ONLY IN THE HOPE OF UNDERSTANDING WHY THIS IS HAPPENING.


YOU REALLY BELIEVE A "CREATURE" DID THIS.
THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE OUT HERE RESEARCHING.
WELL... YES. YOU TOLD ME YOU SAW IT.
LAST TIME YOU WOKE.

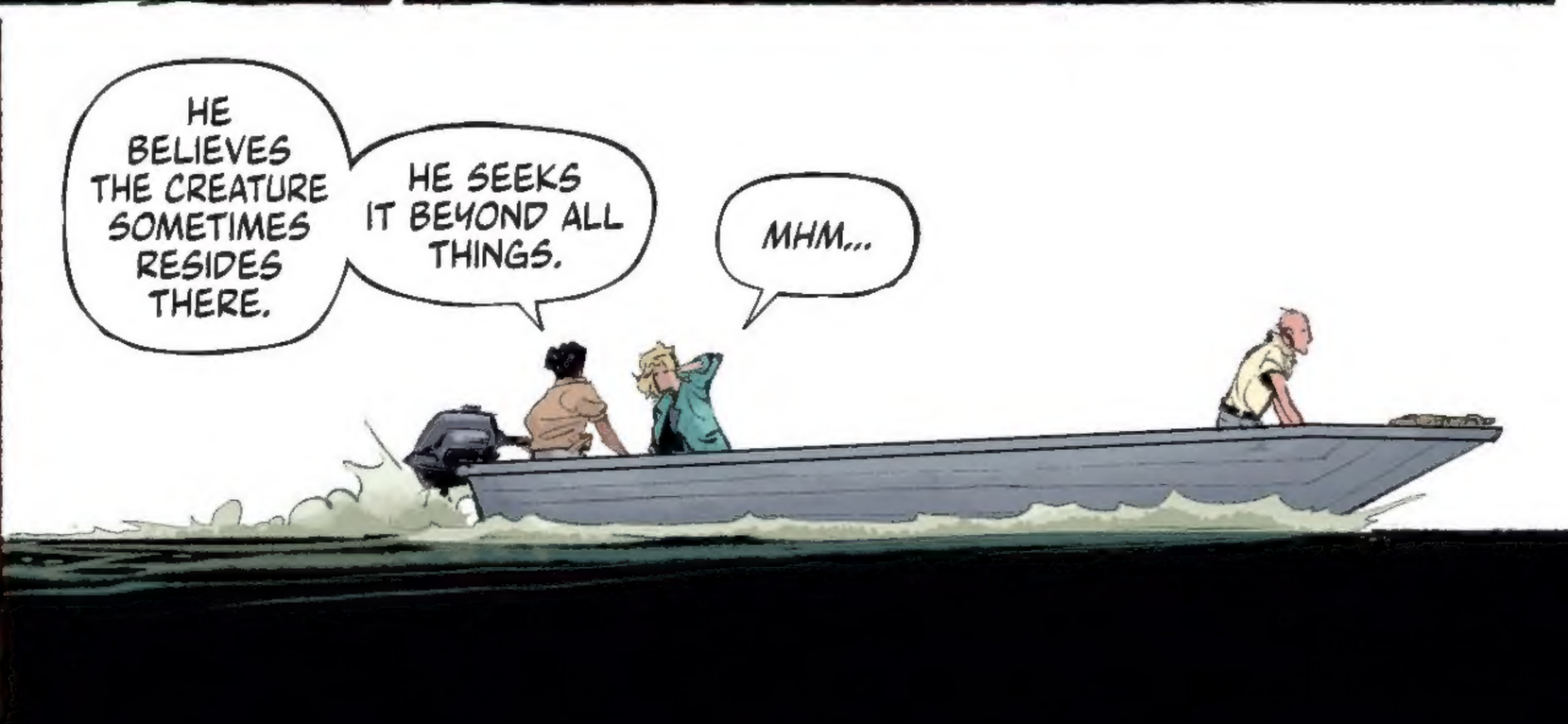

I WAS CONFUSED.
THERE'S A VERY REAL KILLER OUT THERE.
COLLIER CLAIMED SEVEN VICTIMS IN THE U.S., AND NOW I'M CERTAIN HE'S BASING HIMSELF OUT OF THE RAINFOREST.
KILLING UNCHECKED.
SOMETHING ELSE HERE IN THE LUNG. PROBABLY INHALED ALONG WITH THE WATER.
AH.
SO THAT'S WHERE HE DIED.
YOU KNOW WHERE THE MURDER TOOK PLACE?
I CAN HAZARD A STRONG GUESS.
YOU SEE THIS BLACK SILT IN AMONG THIS SAND?
TAKE ME THERE.
TAKE ME WHERE YOU CAN FIND THIS BLACK SAND.
IF YOU INSIST, MY DEAR.
I THINK WE CAN MANAGE THAT.

UNIVERSAL PICTURES
AND SKYBOUND PRESENT...
CREATURE
FROM THE
BLACK LAGOON
LIVES!

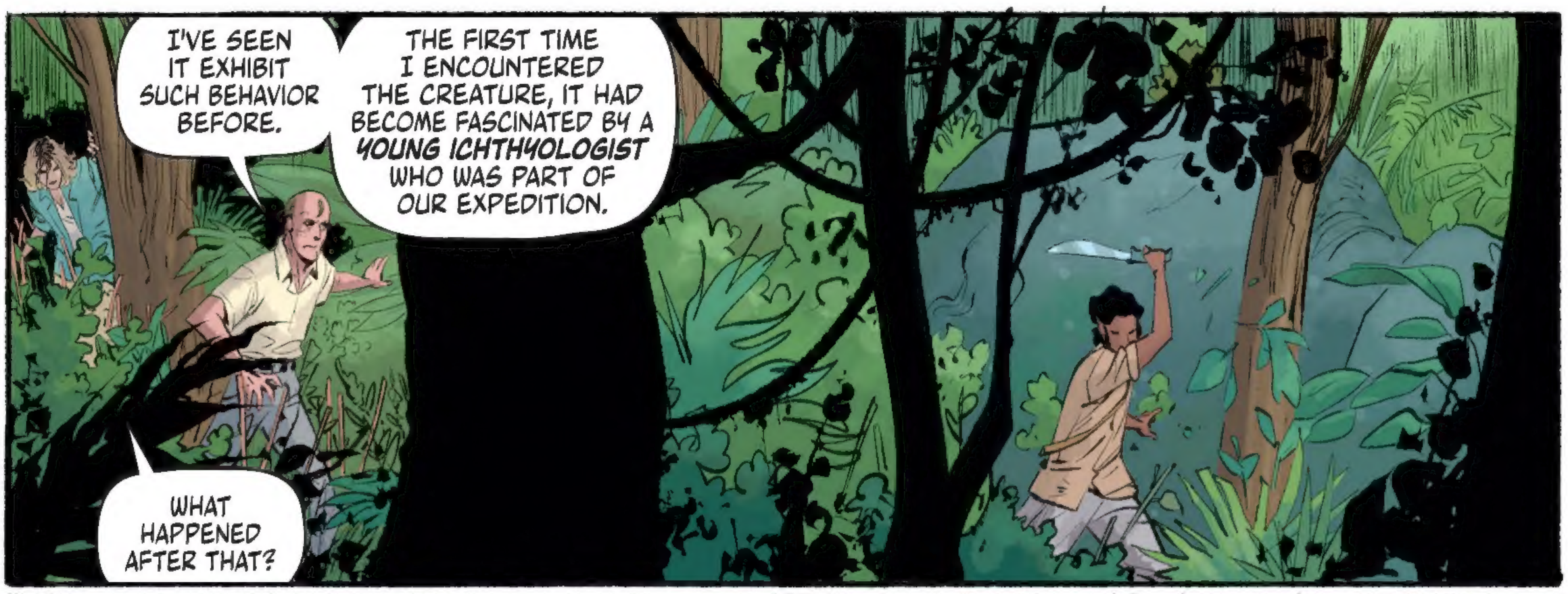
CHRISTIANO, RIGHT?
UH-- THANK YOU FOR...YOU KNOW, SAVING ME AND STUFF.

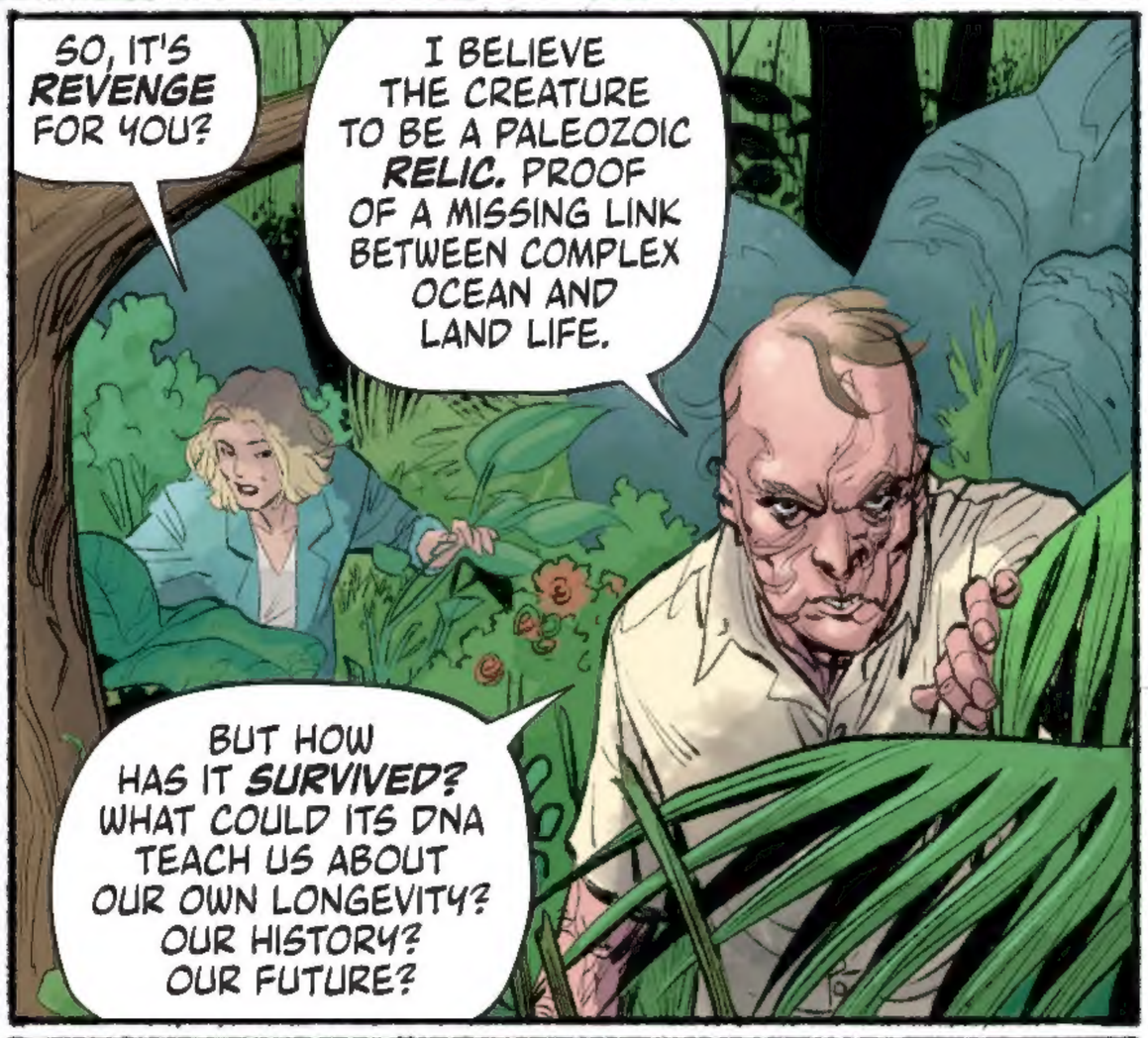

I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THERE WAS A LAGOON IN THIS VICINITY.
FEW DO. IT IS DIFFICULT TO REACH AND HAS A REPUTATION FOR DEATH.
I WOULD RATHER WE WERE NOT GOING THERE, IF I'M HONEST.

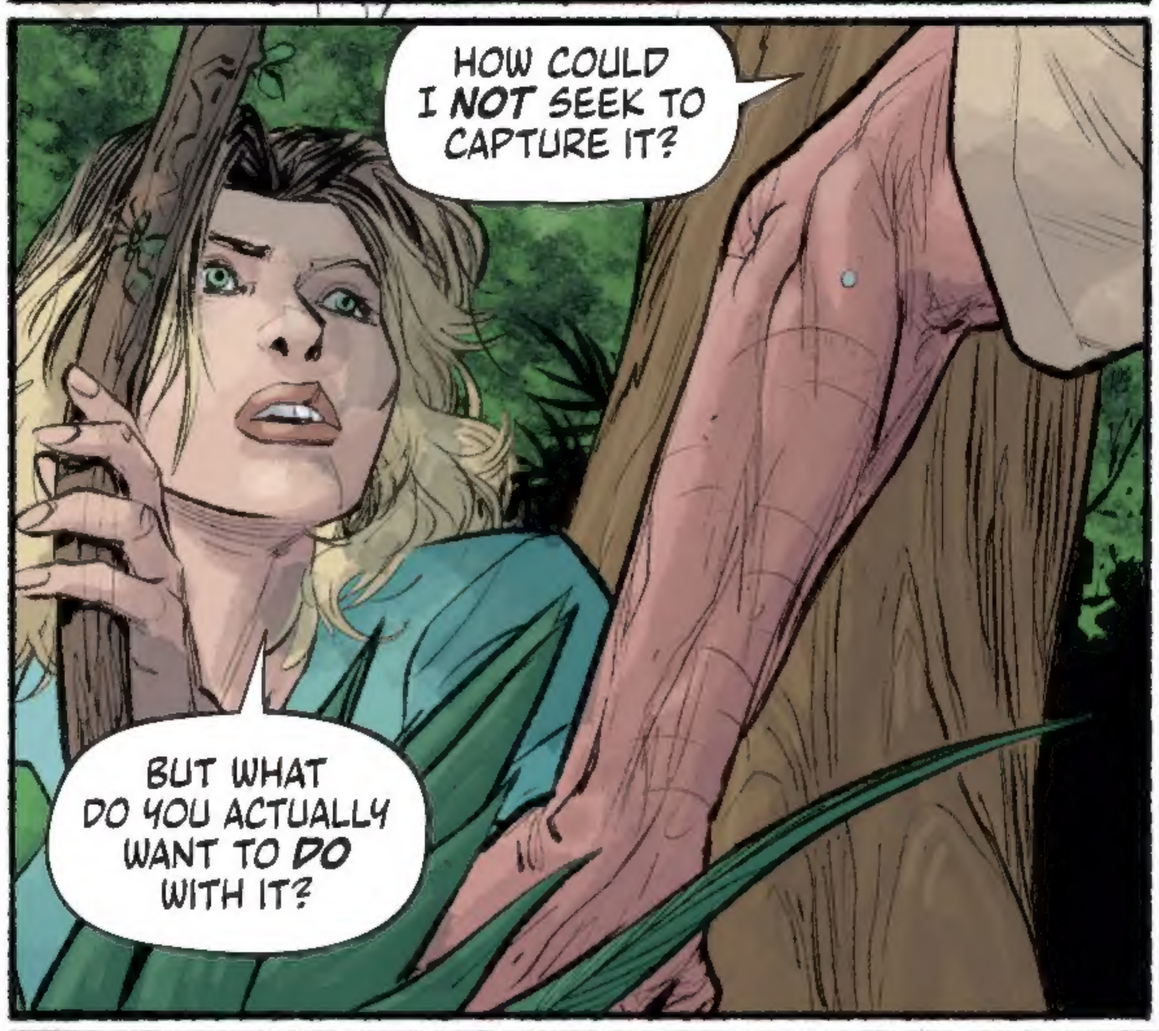
THE DOCTOR DOESN'T SEEM WORRIED.

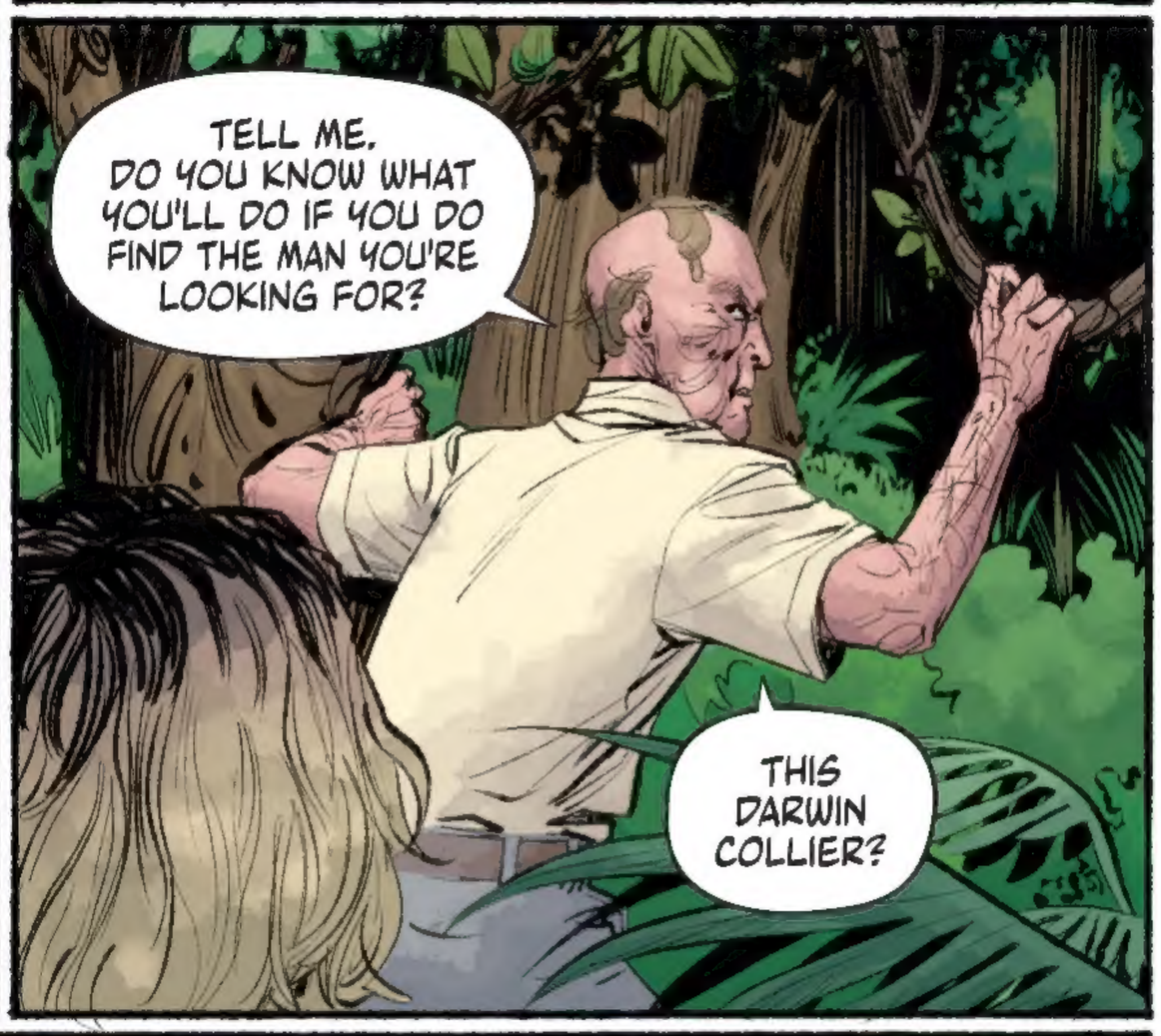

HE BELIEVES THE CREATURE SOMETIMES RESIDES THERE.
HE SEEKS IT BEYOND ALL THINGS.
MHM...

"...THE CREATURE AGAIN. GREAT.
"SO NOW IT'S STALKING ME, HUH?"


I'VE SEEN IT EXHIBIT SUCH BEHAVIOR BEFORE.
THE FIRST TIME I ENCOUNTERED THE CREATURE, IT HAD BECOME FASCINATED BY A YOUNG ICHTHYOLOGIST WHO WAS PART OF OUR EXPEDITION.
WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT?


SO, IT'S REVENGE FOR YOU?
I BELIEVE THE CREATURE TO BE A PALEOZOIC RELIC. PROOF OF A MISSING LINK BETWEEN COMPLEX OCEAN AND LAND LIFE.
BUT HOW HAS IT SURVIVED? WHAT COULD ITS DNA TEACH US ABOUT OUR OWN LONGEVITY? OUR HISTORY? OUR FUTURE?


HOW COULD I NOT SEEK TO CAPTURE IT?
BUT WHAT DO YOU ACTUALLY WANT TO DO WITH IT?


TELL ME. DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'LL DO IF YOU DO FIND THE MAN YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?
THIS DARWIN COLLIER?

EXPOSE HIM. SEE HIM ARRESTED AND TRIED. SEE THAT JUSTICE CAN REALLY BE SAID TO EXIST IN THE WORLD.
JUSTICE.
SHH!
I THINK WE HAVE A PROBLEM.
LISTEN...

"...NARCOS."
WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE?
THE COCAINE LABS ARE TWO OR THREE MILES NORTH.
THEY MUST BE HERE FOR HIM. HE'S REALLY HERE...
COLLIER!
COLLIER, ARE YOU THERE?

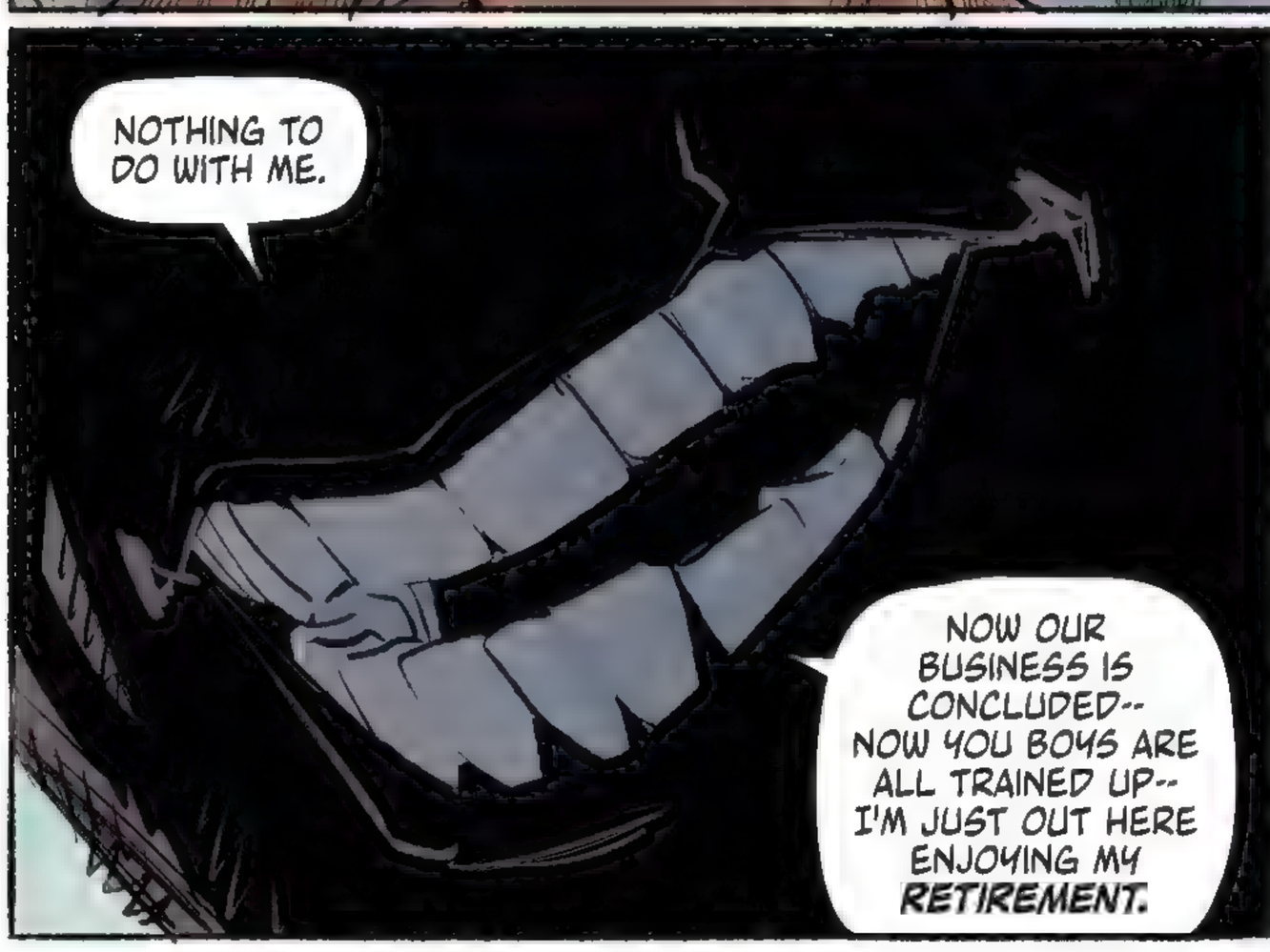
PAULO.
I THOUGHT WE WEREN'T ON SPEAKING TERMS NO MORE...
...NOT AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO POOR OL' EDUARDO.
IT'S HIM.

EASY.
I WAS HIRED TO TURN YOU BUNCHA FARMBOY NARCOS INTO A UNIT THAT COULD FUNCTION LIKE MARINES.

THAT MEANS DISCIPLINE.
EDUARDO GOT DISCIPLINED.

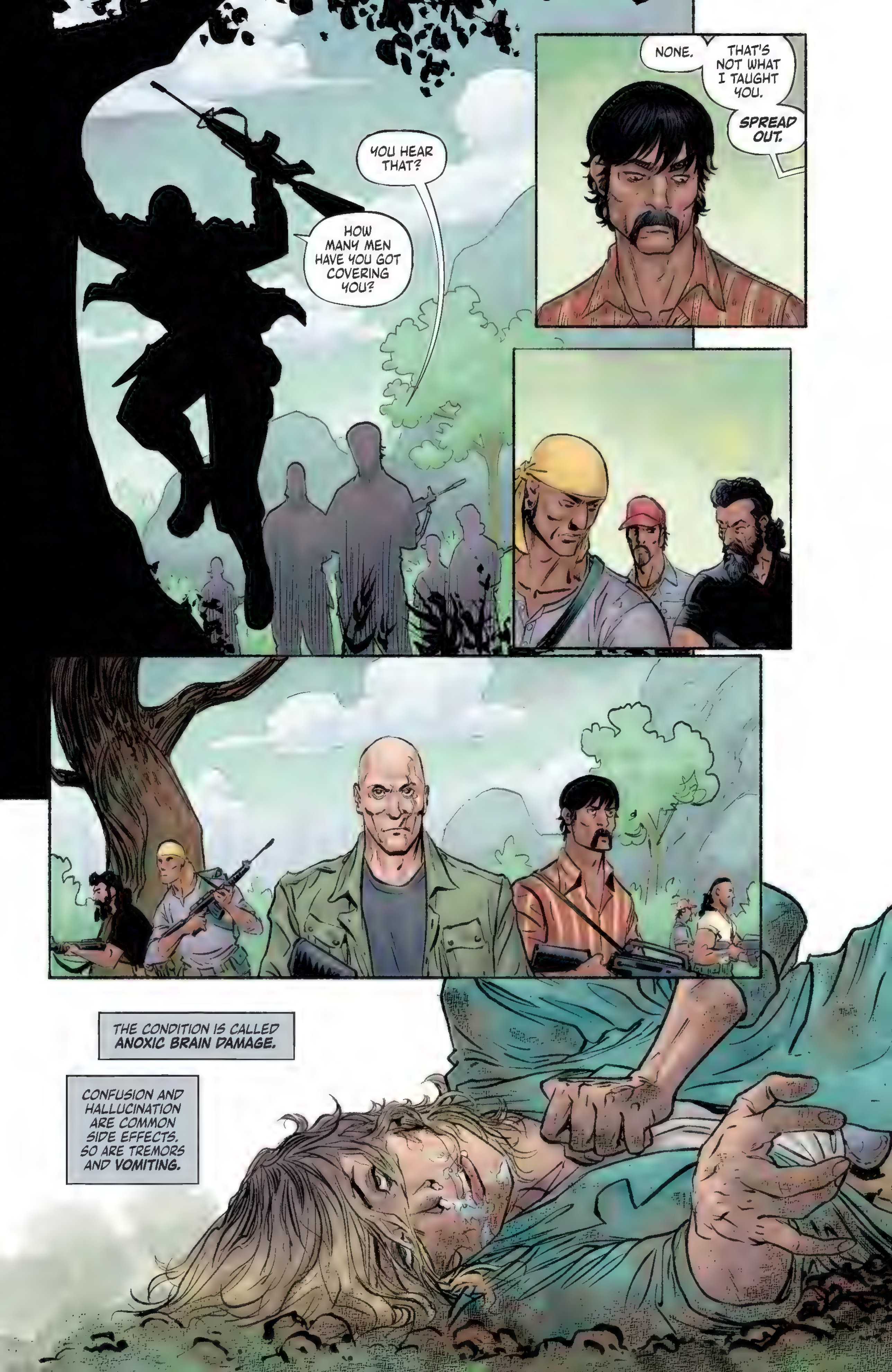
I CAN'T SEE HIM. I NEED TO SEE HIS FACE.
MS. MARSDEN, WHERE ARE YOU GOING? BE CAREFUL!

YEAH. WELL, NOW THERE ARE BODIES SHOWING UP DOWNRIVER.
IT'S DRAWING ATTENTION TO THE RAINFOREST. THEY DON'T WANT ATTENTION DRAWN TO THE RAINFOREST.

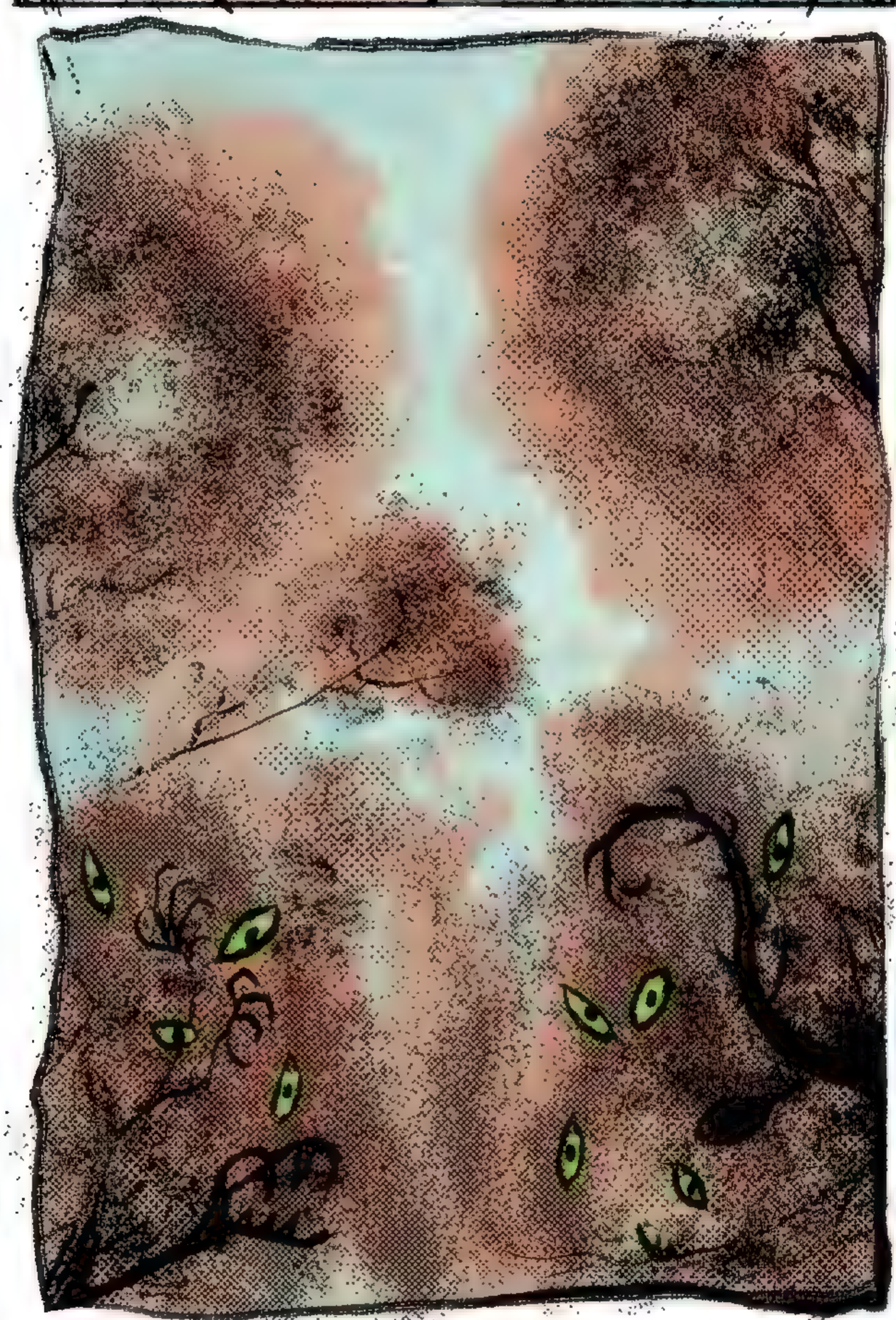

NOTHING TO DO WITH ME.
NOW OUR BUSINESS IS CONCLUDED-- NOW YOU BOYS ARE ALL TRAINED UP-- I'M JUST OUT HERE ENJOYING MY RETIREMENT.

THERE'S SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT THIS PLACE, DON'T YOU FEEL IT?

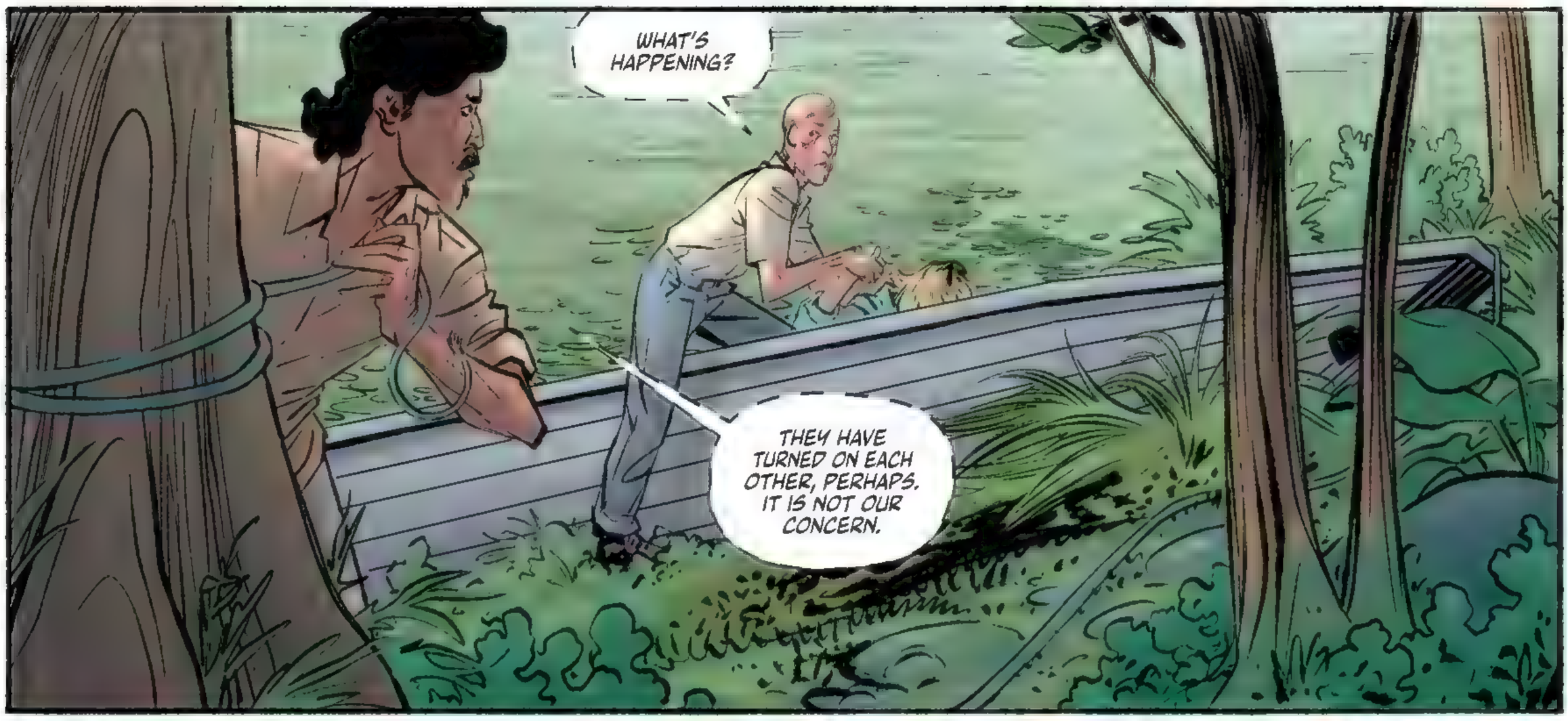
THERE'S A DEPTH TO ITS BEAUTY NOT LIKE ANYWHERE ELSE.
YOU. I'VE FOUND YOU.
I'VE FOUND YOU, YOU--
I-- I'VE--
HUK!


YOU HEAR THAT?
HOW MANY MEN HAVE YOU GOT COVERING YOU?
NONE.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I TAUGHT YOU.
SPREAD OUT.
THE CONDITION IS CALLED ANOXIC BRAIN DAMAGE.
CONFUSION AND HALLUCINATION ARE COMMON SIDE EFFECTS. SO ARE TREMORS AND VOMITING.

SUCH EFFECTS ARE NOT ALWAYS INSTANTANEOUS.

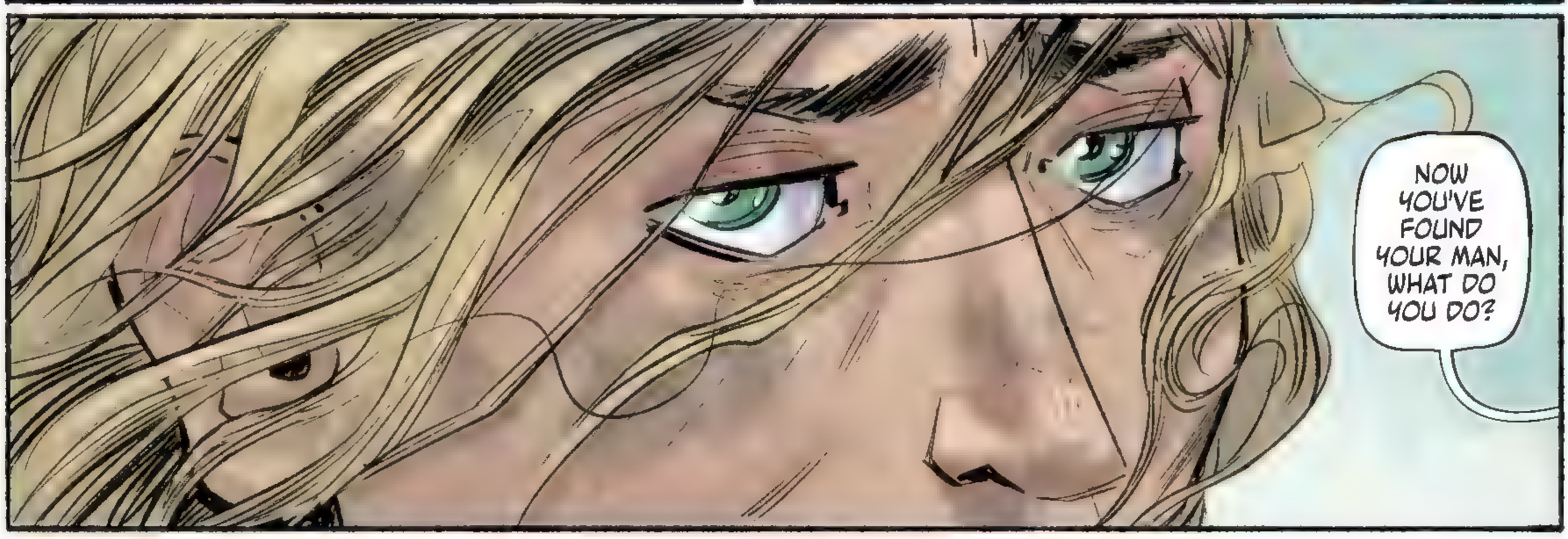


OVER THERE. I SEE MOVEMENT. I SEE...
OH GOD.
HRRRL
HRRRLL
EL MONSTRO!
BLAAM
BLAAM
SHOOT IT!
BLAAM


WHAT'S HAPPENING?
THEY HAVE TURNED ON EACH OTHER, PERHAPS. IT IS NOT OUR CONCERN.

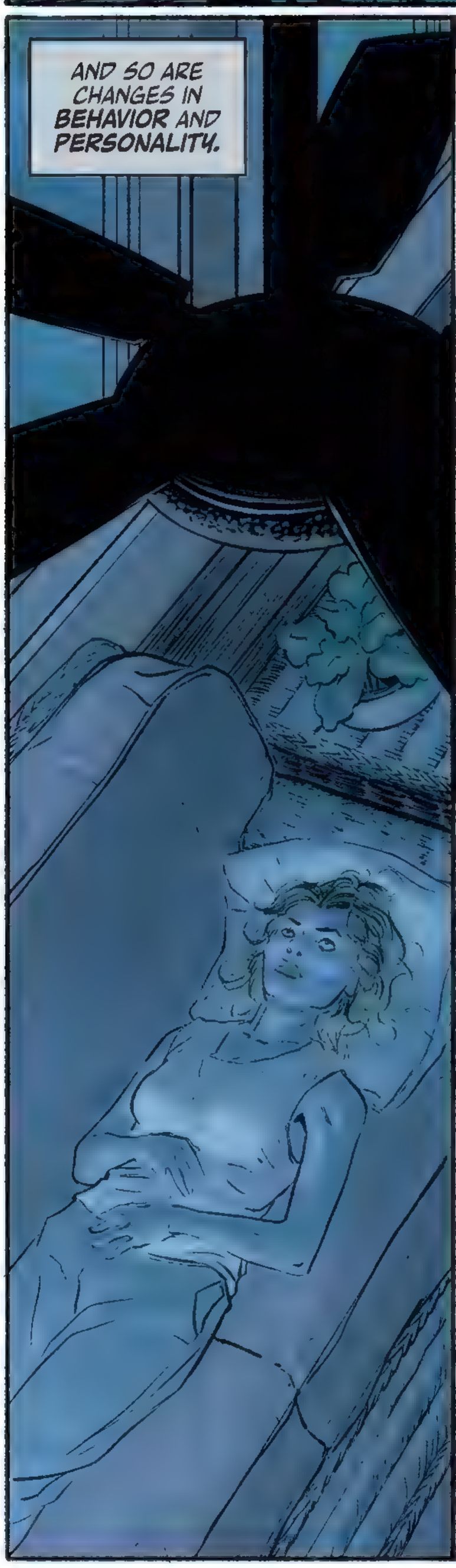
HMM, UNLESS...

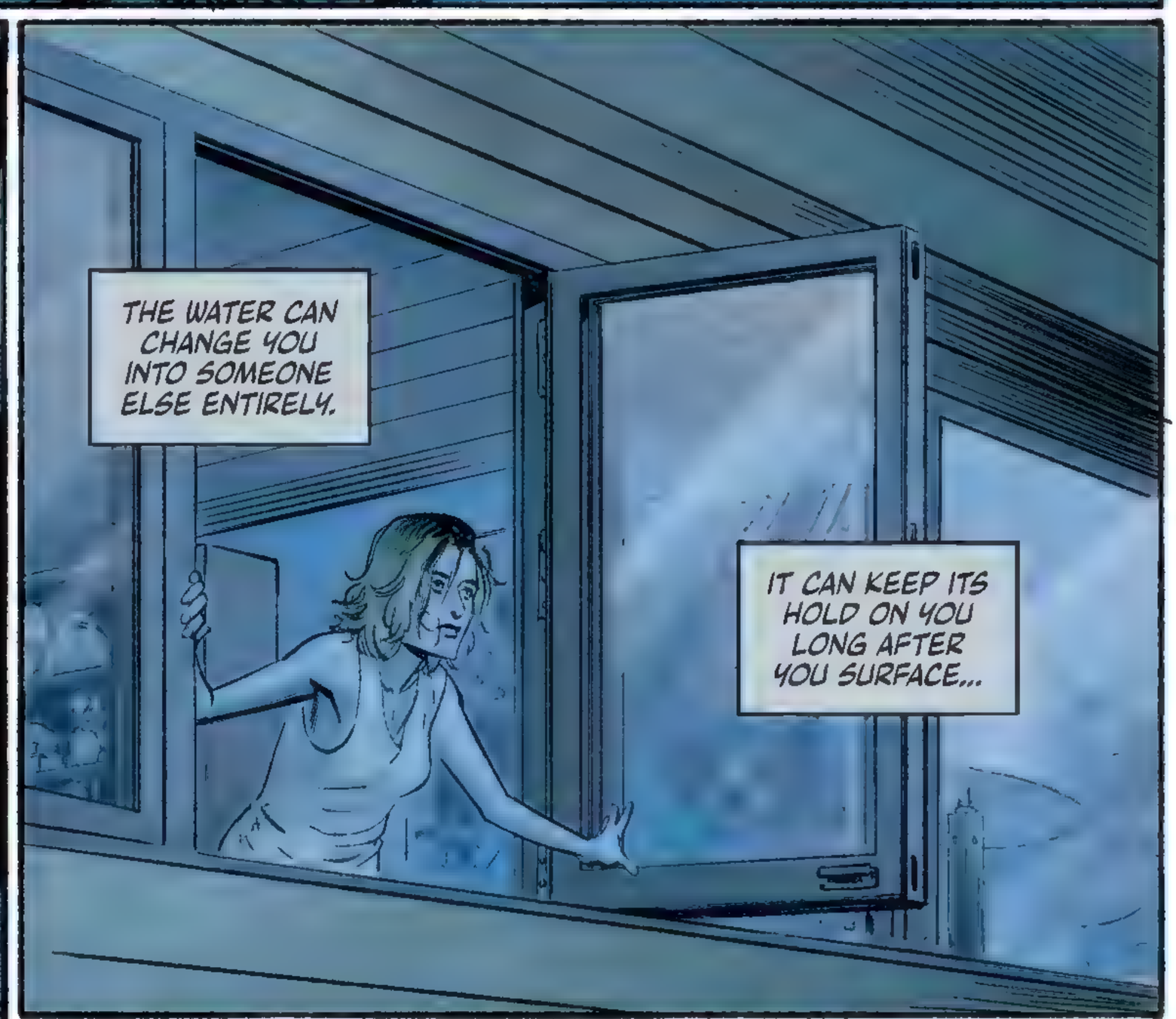
MS. MARSDEN?
I--I'M OK. I THINK I'M OK.
IT WAS THE SHOCK. OF SEEING HIM.
MS. MARSDEN. THIS COLLIER...
...IF HE'S WORKING WITH THE NARCOS, THAT MEANS HE'S UNTOUCHABLE. THE POLICE ARE PAID OFF.
SO WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?


NOW YOU'VE FOUND YOUR MAN, WHAT DO YOU DO?

WELL.
I THINK YOU'LL HAVE TO AGREE THIS WEREN'T ME, HUH?
BUT-- WHAT?
THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE. A BEAUTIFUL PLACE LIKE NOWHERE ELSE.

THE CONDITION IS CALLED ANOXIC BRAIN DAMAGE.
CONFUSION AND HALLUCINATION ARE COMMON SIDE EFFECTS. SO ARE TREMORS AND VOMITING.


AND SO ARE CHANGES IN BEHAVIOR AND PERSONALITY.


THE WATER CAN CHANGE YOU INTO SOMEONE ELSE ENTIRELY.
IT CAN KEEP ITS HOLD ON YOU LONG AFTER YOU SURFACE...

...YOU CAN CARRY IT WITH YOU FOREVER.

I'M GOING TO KILL HIM.
THAT'S THE ONLY JUSTICE TO BE FOUND IN THE RAINFOREST, ISN'T IT?

THAT'S HOW THIS ENDS.

MONSTER MAIL

Got something to say? We want to hear from you! Email us at:
UniversalMonsters@skybound.com and mark "OK TO PRINT!"

My fellow monsters!

What an issue, eh? Looks like things are heating up between Kate and the Gill-Man...and just wait till you see what's up with Collier next issue...it's quite SHOCKING if I don't say so myself! At the time of this writing, the first issue of Creature from the Black Lagoon Lives! has yet to hit to hit stands, so this will officially be the last Dracula-centric monster mail. So...let's get into it!

Hi Monster Mail

I love this version of Dracula expanding upon the lore very much. It looks really good and the art style with the painted look gives it this amazing Gothic feeling. I my self did a version of Dracula 3 years ago and now working on a play of it. I can't wait to see where this Universal Dracula goes. Will we see more Universal monsters like Dracula Daughter or The Creature from the Black Lagoon?

Chris Denmead
Framingham
Massachusetts

Thank you, Chris! As an avid fan of the theatre, I would love to see your play! Hopefully this issue answers your question, and yes, we have plans for many more monsters to come!

I'm a huge fan of Universal Monsters and thoroughly anticipating the continuing partnership of Tynion IV/Simmonds in The Department of Truth, so Dracula was an immediate pickup for me. I have got to say that Simmonds artwork in this is perfection, and that duo cover for Local Comic Shop Day....*chef's kiss* I cannot wait for the next issues!

Angelika Silva

Thank you, Angelika! You're referring to the Jason Shawn Alexander Dracula #1-2 covers he did for LCSD...I'm glad you enjoyed those! JSA has been one of my favorite artists for many years. And Martin Simmonds? Yes! Let's hope this is the year he finally wins some awards!

Since he stopped writing licensed properties (most notably, BATMAN, etc.) James Tynion IV has really introduced some marvelous works to the creator-owned indie marketplace (most notably DEPARTMENT OF TRUTH, SOMETHING IS KILLING THE CHILDREN, etc.) In the text afterword to Issue #1 he explains that he prefers to work with his own creations, but accepted the assignment to write an adaptation of the Universal film version of Dracula because it made a lasting impression on his young developing mind.

While this new series respectfully recreates the feel and look (thanks to amazing Simmonds art) of that film, Tyrion's script is a breath of fresh (not foul) air. He's really bringing this legendary icon to new life and anyone who is a fan of the film, the novel, or the vampire genre should be checking this series out.

Simmond's previous art chores on DEPARTMENT OF TRUTH are memorable but sometimes murky. Here, he again both illustrates, inks, and colors his work in a painted style that bring more clarity than I've ever seen from him before. The images are incredible. Tynion wisely hasn't scripted one word of dialogue for Dracula so far, just letting the visuals communicate the power and menace behind the character. Also, I've never seen Renfield imagined and portrayed as creepy as he is here.

The introduction of the main characters (Harkness, Van Helsing, etc) and build up to the first victim to mingle blood with Dracula (Lucy) is dramatized perfectly. There's been a lot of focus (and very well done) on Renfield so far, but I expect things to progress in bloody fashion very soon. This book is a winner. FIVE STARS.

Respectfully;
Mike Clarke
Pop Culture Podium blog

What a thoughtful letter, Mike! Five stars for you as well. I don't think it was until the end of the second issue that I realized Dracula hadn't actually spoken yet. Hope you enjoyed his one line in issue 4!

Hey Monster Squad,

I just finished issue #1 of the new skybound/ universal monsters collaboration "Dracula" and I have to say I'm absolutely stunned by the quality of this book. From the heavy premium card stock cover, to the beautiful hand painted interior artwork from Martin Simmons, up unto the heartfelt final letter by writer James Tynion

IV, everything about this book screams quality and a clear love & passion for the source material that it's adapting.

After reading Tynion's letter, I felt even more connected to the story that I just consumed. As an avid horror fan, and a life long Monster Kid (even though I'm now 38), I too cannot remember a time when the Universal Monsters were not simply a part of my world. They have always existed in my universal understanding of the world, their metaphors and themes - the struggle of the outsider, the fear of the other, the struggle for companionship, unrequited love, projections of what it truly means to be a monster - and more are as much a part of me as any moral lesson that was supposed to be taught to me in Sunday school.

The monsters were always there. Their themes & messages etched deep into the fabric of who I came to be.

So to see this first outing of these cultural icons being handle with such clear reverence and care is truly something special. And I just wanted to let the entire team know that it does not go unnoticed. It is appreciated and I look forward to continuing the story, and I truly hope that is readers can look forward to future installments of the rest of the classic universal cannon being tackled with the same reverence and depth.

Long live monsters. May their meanings haunt us forever.

-Jonny Bones

Jonny Bones! First of all, we're the same age so right on, dude. Second, thank you for this excellent letter! Reverence is absolutely the place which we are coming from with all the Universal Monsters books. We love these characters and we're honored to contribute our own takes to the stories we all know and love. Long live monsters!

What can I say? So far this series has been pure ecstasy for me. When I learned Skybound was going to be doing new Universal Monster stories in comic book format, it was one of the best news if not the best news I heard all year. I love that James and Martin are able to take this movie that came out over a hundred years ago and give it a fresh coat of paint (quite literally) for a new generation without totally changing it. As Van Helsing said, "The superstition of yesterday can become the reality of today".

Nathan Hughes

Thanks, Nathan! Happy to fill your days with some good news. And hopefully we'll have more good news for you soon!

First off, I want to say that I love the Universal Monsters and when I saw that the Dracula series was going to be the first in the line - I said sign me up. And to top it off even more, having James Tynion, IV writing it - just made it even better. I've liked his work for a long time and when I see that he writes on another series, I have to try it. Not only is the writing great on this series - it really sets the mood like the old B&W movies, but the art by Martin Simmonds continues the eerie factor for the book. I can't say enough nice things about Dracula.

My only question I have - What's the next Universal Monster that gets their own comic?

Always a fan,
Chris Marksberry

You're holding it in your hands, Chris! (Hopefully.) And more to come...thank you!

Grrrrr...smoke good! Good! Grrrr..Drac good! Good! Me next! Me next!

(thinking: Or I through you like to get pretty flower!)

Tom (Frankenstein) Hebbeln

Letter good, Tom! Me thank you. Frankenstein soon!

Hey there,

After finishing the final issue of Dracula I am ABSOLUTELY pumped for Creature from the black lagoon lives. I'm currently studying abroad and I brought all four issues with me on the plane. My group is going to read and analyze it in my comics writing class! Although I adore Dracula, I think the Creature deserves some love too. I'm excited to see how a movie from the 1950s will be interpreted and adapted, especially since it's not based on a book. It's on my calendar!!!!!

-Kitt Parris <3

Thank you, Kitt! I hope you've liked what we've done with the Creature so far. Would love to hear more about how the comics writing class goes! Hit us with that hard criticism – we can take it!

Well, that just about wraps it up! If you're curious about this Dracula book that folks keep raving about, go ahead and grab the hardcover collection of UNIVERSAL MONSTERS: DRACULA (ISBN: 9781534397552) in bookstores everywhere right now!

Until next time – keep it scary out there!

Alex Antone
Los Angeles, CA

CODENAME G.I. JOE CONTINUES

SCARLETT

Red-hot writer **KELLY THOMPSON** (*DC's Birds of Prey*) and artist **MARCO FERRARI** (*Frontiersman*) introduce some of the most anticipated characters to the Energon Universe.

ON SALE JUNE 6, 2024

WELCOME TO THE ENERGON UNIVERSE

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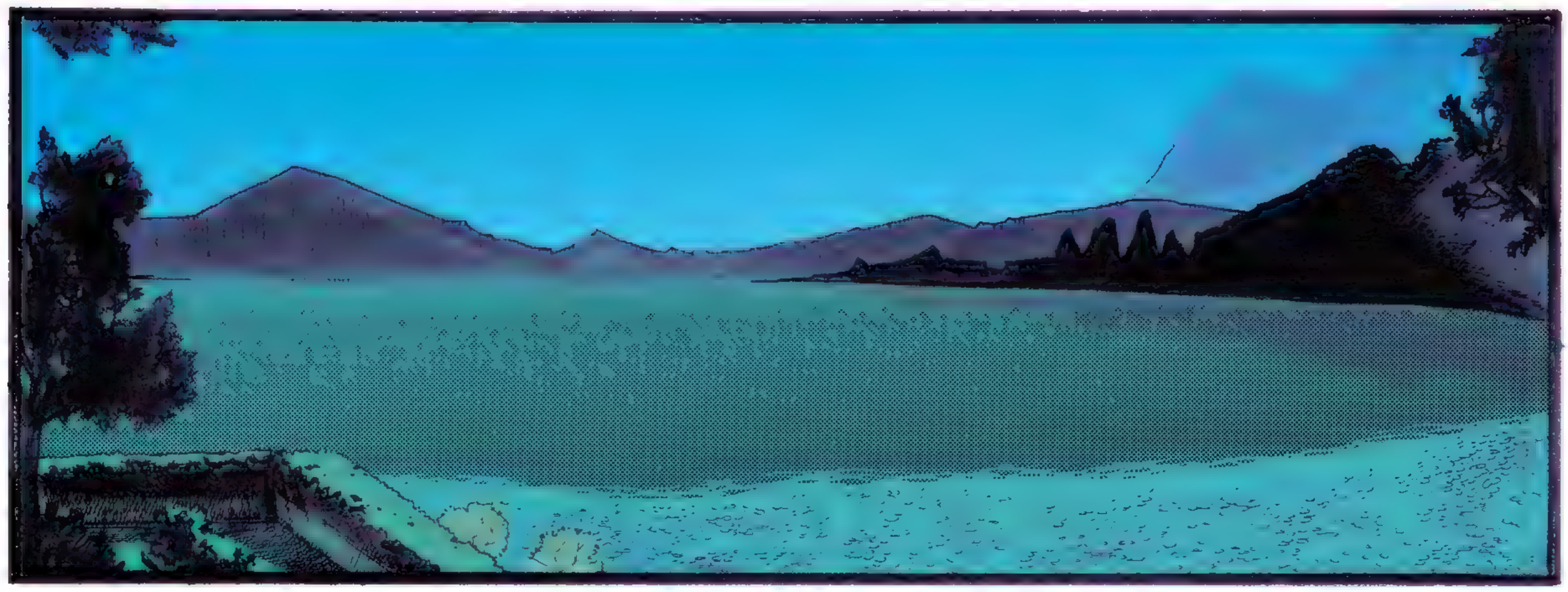

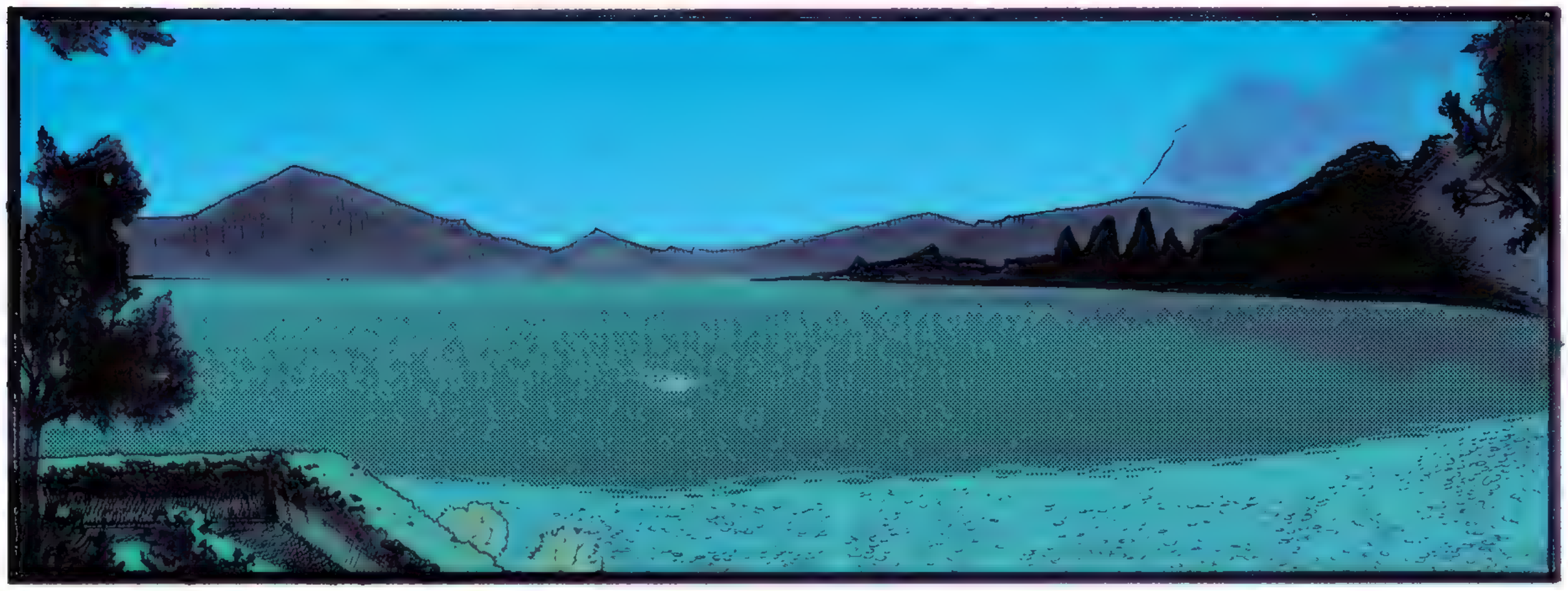

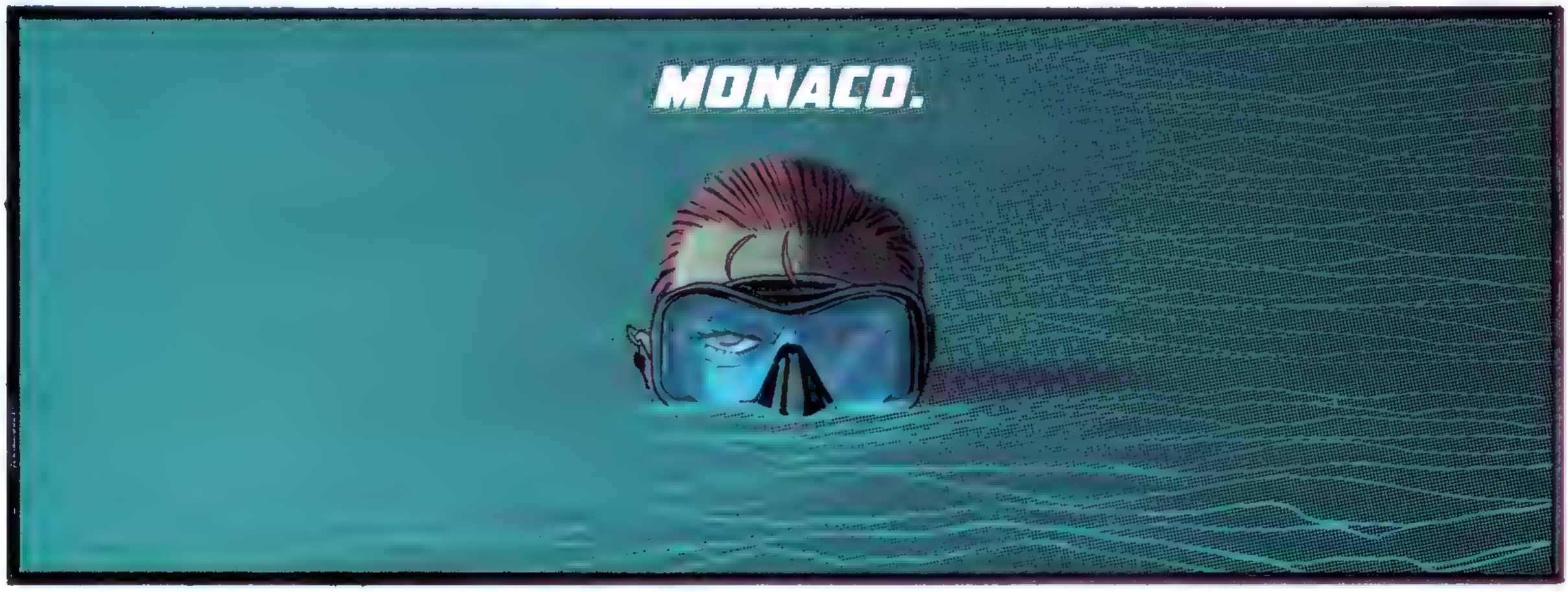
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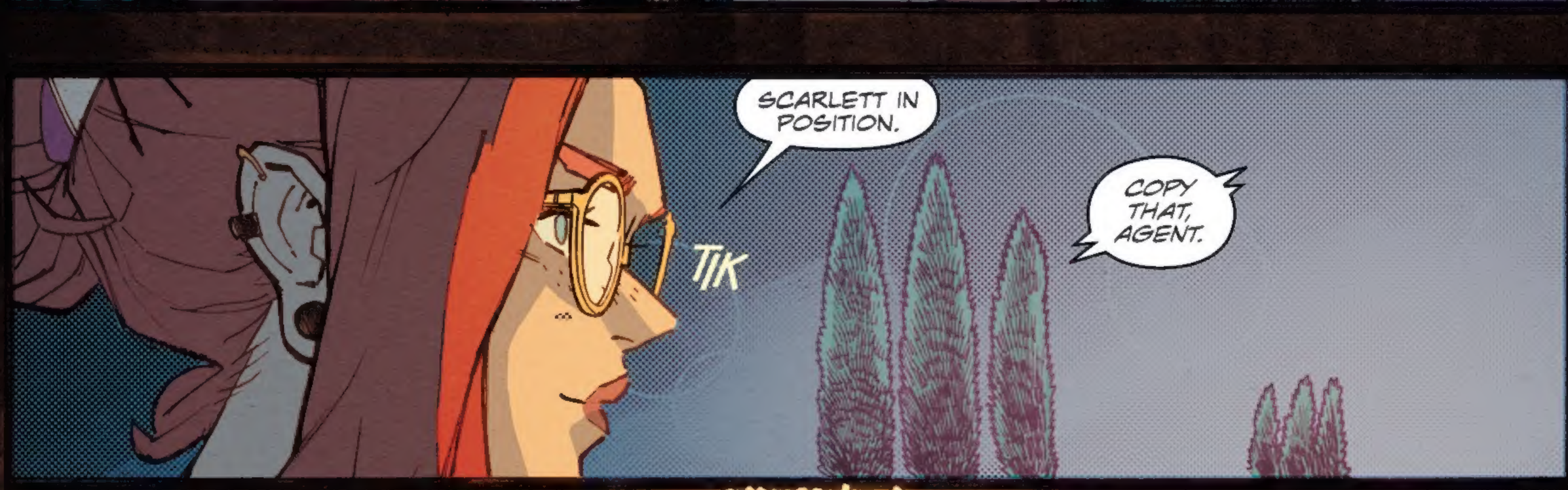

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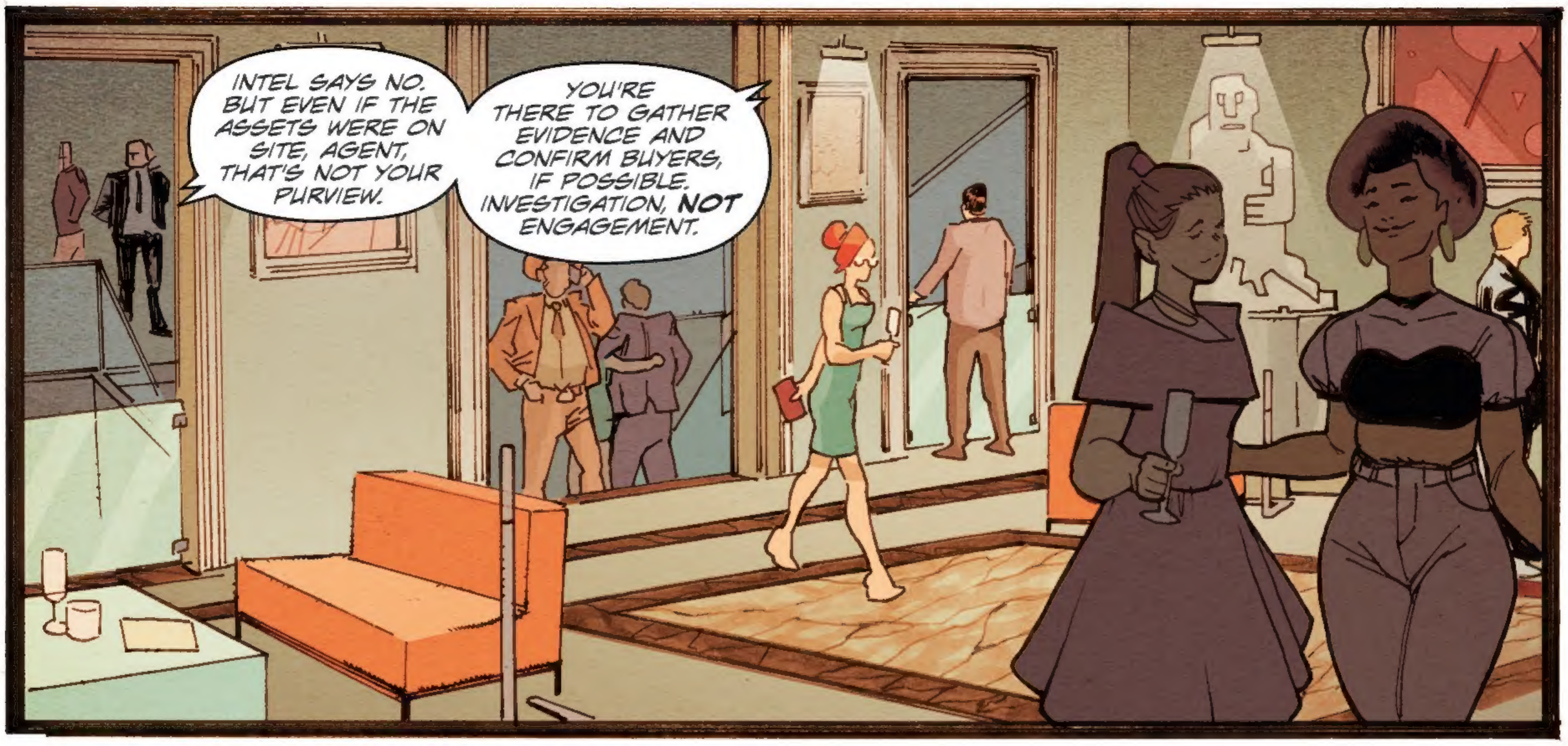
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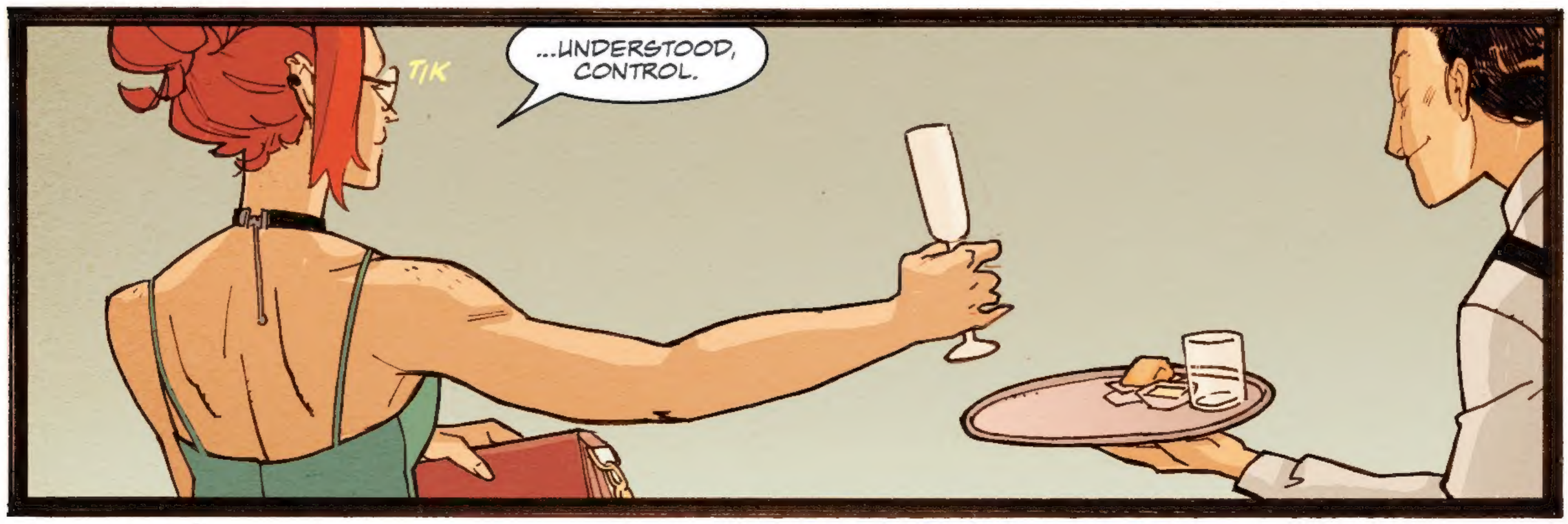
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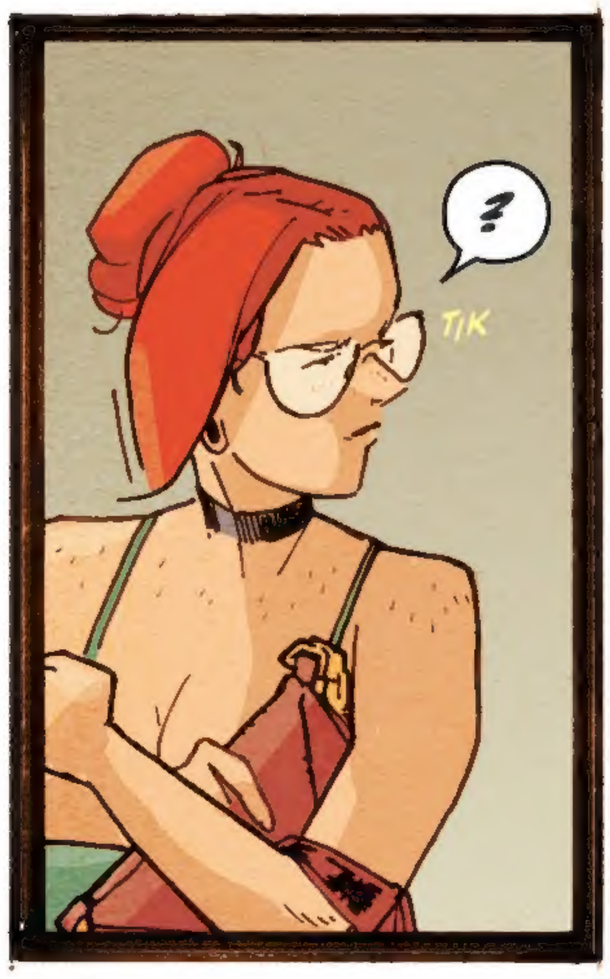
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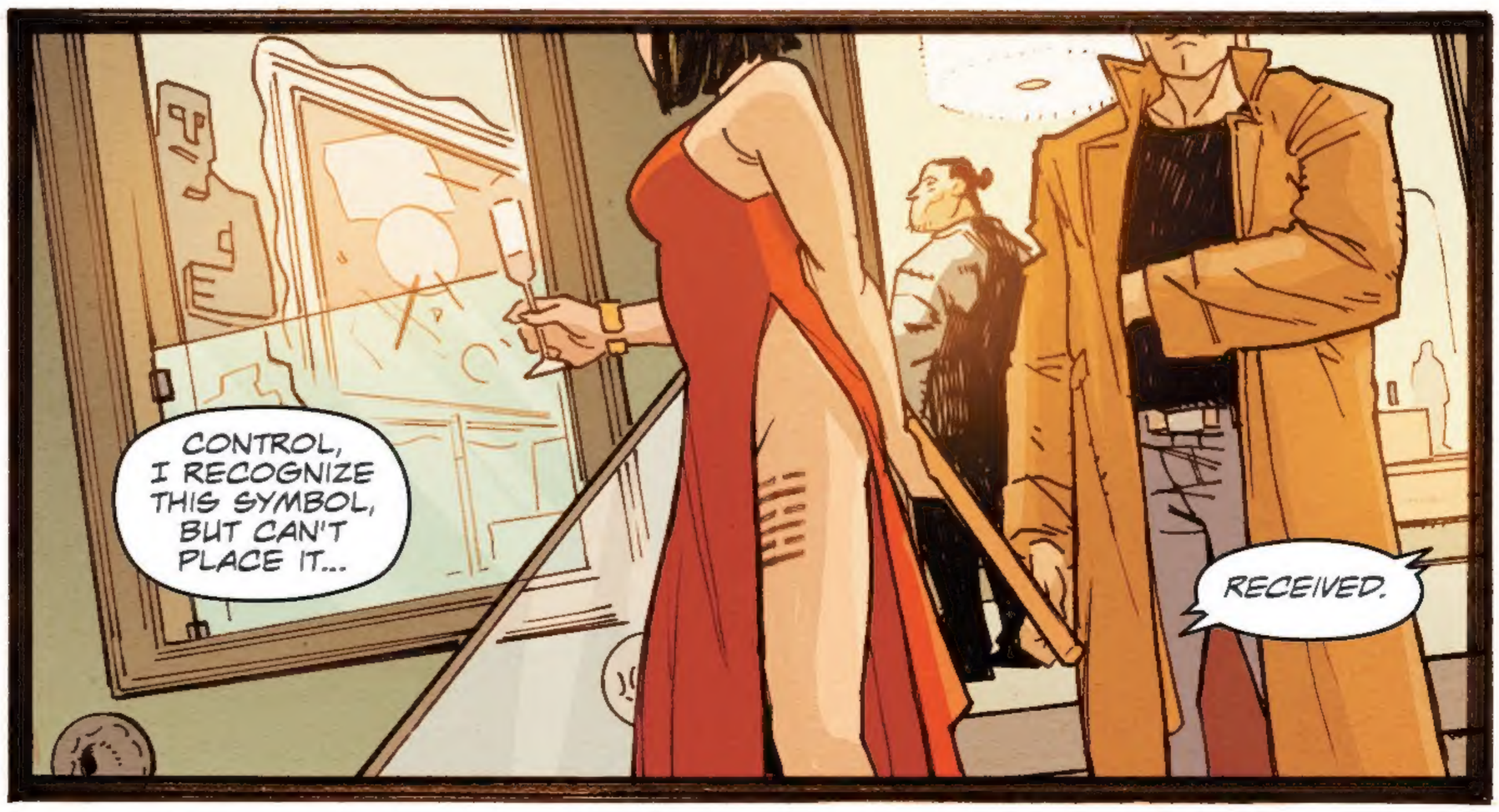
CONTROL, I RECOGNIZE THIS SYMBOL, BUT CAN'T PLACE IT...
RECEIVED.

NEXT ISSUE:

THE HUNTER BECOMES THE HUNTED!

MAIN COVER ART BY
MATTHEW ROBERTS & DAVE STEWART

ISSUE THREE ON SALE
JUNE 26TH 2024

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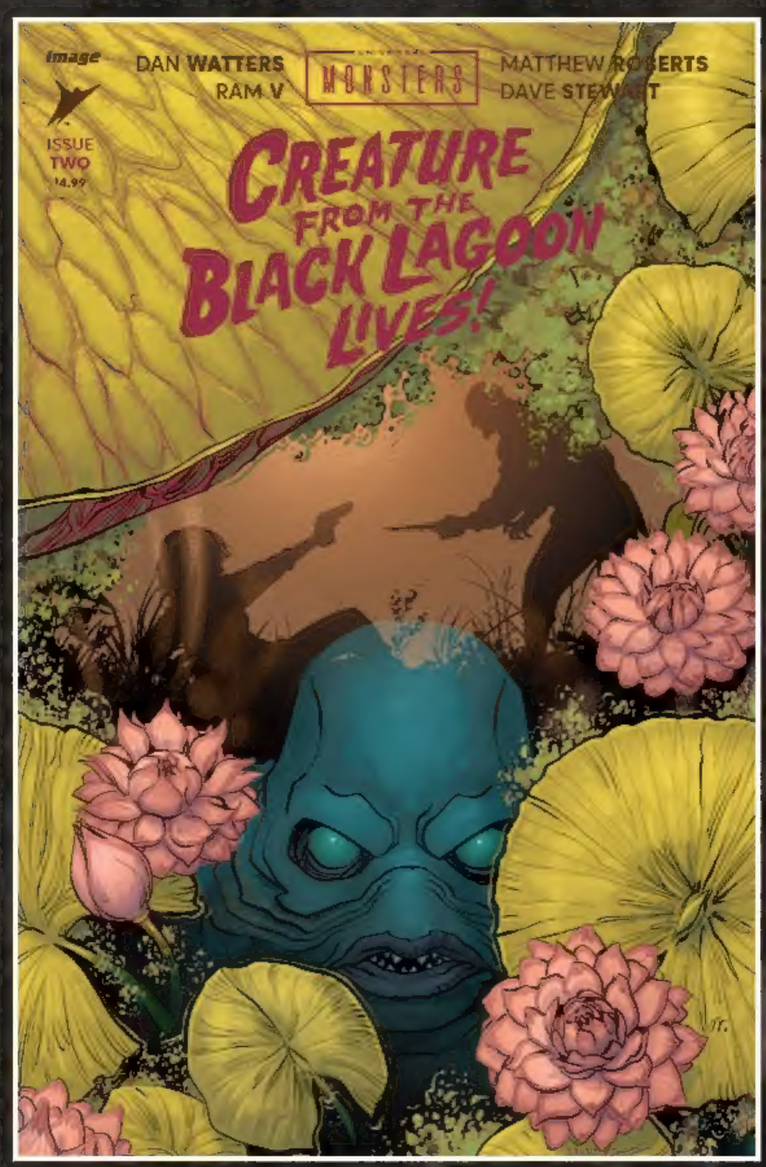
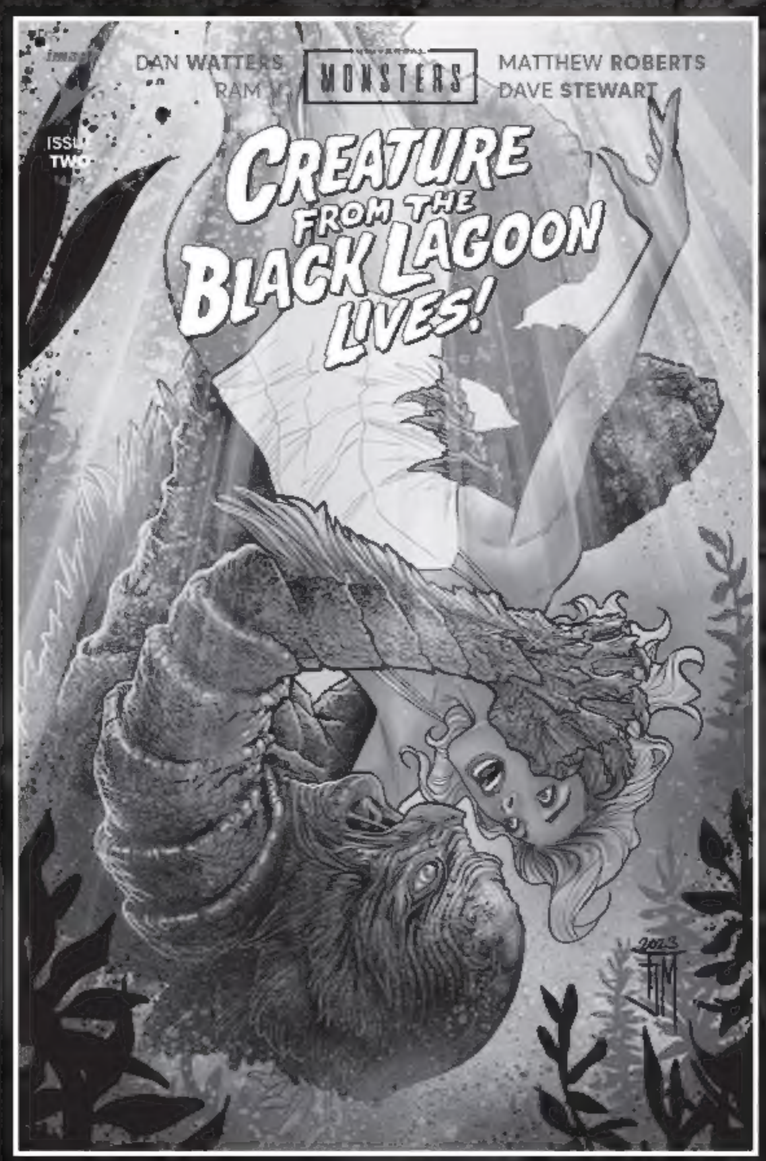


MATTHEW ROBERTS & DAVE STEWART

FRANCIS MANAPUL

DANI & BRAD SIMPSON



FRANCIS MANAPUL

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